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TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

(सत्यमेव जयते)

Reply to Niyogi Committee

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FIRST EDITION 1957

**Price : Rs. 2.00
3s. 6d.
\$0.75**

**Printed by V. D. Limaye at the India Printing Works, 9 Bakehouse Lane,
Fort, Bombay, and published by A. Soares for and on behalf of the
Catholic Association of Bombay, 5 Convent Street, Bombay 1.**

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INTRODUCTION

What is truth? asked sceptical Pilate, and, as Bacon says, did not wait for an answer. The writers responsible for this book evidently do not subscribe to Pilate's attitude. Else they would not have selected the title for the book *Truth Shall Prevail*. They believe there is such a thing as objective truth, that this truth is ascertainable by human reason and that truth, for all the attempts to cloud and defeat it, does eventually shine clear and prevail. In that faith and in that spirit is this book addressed to all men of integrity and goodwill in India, be their creed what it may. For all men who have a divine spark in them, owe a loyalty to truth, which transcends all other loyalties.

There are in India, as in other countries, individuals whose eyes are hermetically sealed against the light of truth. Some of these are wilfully blind. They are beyond redemption. There are others who are honest but so deeply prejudiced that the light cannot break through the barrier. They are, to use a theological expression, suffering from invincible ignorance. But the vast majority are open to reason and to evidence, whatever may be their personal or national prepossessions. To these fair-minded people is this book addressed. The writers will gladly abide by their verdict.

The book purports to be a reply to the Niyogi Committee's Report.

This Committee was appointed by the Madhya Pradesh Government by their Resolution of April 14, 1954. In this Resolution the Government stated categorically *inter alia* that "representations have been made to Government from time to time that Christian missionaries, either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary and other gain, convert illiterate aboriginals and other backward people, thereby offending the feelings of non-Christians", and that "it has further been represented that Missions are utilised directly or indirectly for purposes of political or extra-religious objectives". The Resolution further stated that missionaries had not only denied these charges, but complained of harassment by non-Christians and local officials.

Now no reasonable man could object to authorities appointing a Committee to investigate these very serious charges. They would be failing in their duty, if they didn't. But the extraordinary thing is that, when interested persons wished to have an inspection of these representations, it was found that no such representations were on the files of the Secretariat, nor were they made available to the Committee which was avowedly appointed to inquire into them. Incredible, but still a fact. Whatever allegations and representations were made against missionary activities in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, came *after* the appointment of the Committee and in response to the public invitation by the Committee on April 30, 1954, to submit information in this regard.

The truth is that the appointment of this inquisitorial Committee was not the result of such mythical representations, but of quite different causes. The whole sequence of events which led to the genesis of the Committee is brought out in the illuminating contribution of G. X. Francis, entitled "The Background of the Niyogi Report" in Part II of this volume, to which we invite the special attention of the reader. It is a flagrant exposure of the dark and devious ways of men high in public life. Shri Francis writes with authority. He was intimately connected with the events he narrates and had a first-hand knowledge of the matters he writes about.

The Christians, whether missionaries or laymen, having nothing to hide or be ashamed of, would welcome the Committee, provided it consisted of fair-minded and impartial men who would hold the scales even and arrive at a final verdict after an objective and unprejudiced assessment of relevant evidence. They would not mind what community men of this category might belong to. No voice would be raised if, for instance, the inquiry were to be carried out by the Servants of India Society, which has a branch in Nagpur. Its credentials are beyond question or cavil.

The Madhya Pradesh Government, however, had their own ideas about the composition of the Committee. Impartiality was evidently not one of them. They were pleased to nominate as Chairman an ex-Chief Justice of the Nagpur High Court, Dr. Niyogi, a man deeply prejudiced against foreign missionaries and who had indulged in a public diatribe against them at the very time of his appointment. Dr. Niyogi, as the whole tenor of the Niyogi Report shows, is a man of fixed ideas, which seem to have hardened into obsessions. Such a man, whatever his other qualifications might be, was obviously a mis-

fit as the head of a Committee which was to investigate foreign missionaries' activities. A leading member of the Committee was Shri G. S. Gupta, an Arya Samaj leader. As everyone knows, the Arya Samaj came into existence with the definite objective of combating Christian missionary activity in India. This is its *raison d'être*. The appointment of such a man on such a Committee was a pointer as to how the mind of the Government worked. To add insult to injury, Government appointed as a Christian representative on the Committee Prof. S. K. George, a writer who in his books has denied the divinity of Christ and shown deep animus against Christian Churches and missionary endeavour. When in India, or even in Madhya Pradesh, there was no dearth of eminent Christians with a representative character, what do the authorities do but select one who was the most unrepresentative of them all, but who in the opinion of Government—and in that opinion alone—is “a devout Christian”? Though nothing was known about the prejudices of the remaining members of the Committee, the fact that they had no qualms to sign the Report, carries its own tale. The only man on the Committee who might have carried the confidence of Christians, Seth Govind Das, M.P., resigned early and is not a signatory of the Report.

Christians felt that, with a Committee so constituted, the dice were loaded against them. Should they or should they not co-operate with the Committee—that was the question. Finally, on the earnest advice of the Prime Minister, they decided to co-operate. (*Vide* Francis's interview with Mr. Nehru—Part II, Appendix 3, p. 132.)

Dr. Niyogi and the Committee thought it right to tour the tribal and other areas as a preliminary to the Enquiry. This tour let loose those local elements who had been harassing Christian tribals and missionaries, and certain anti-Christian organisations which staged meetings for the benefit of the Committee and indulged in all sorts of vile and wild allegations against missionaries. The presence of the Committee was fuel to the communal fire. Christian leaders who had accompanied the Committee in their tour, were staggered at the dangerous trends that had appeared. Had they made a mistake in co-operating, and thus lending countenance to the Committee?

Whatever doubts they had were settled by the terms of the inquisitorial questionnaire issued by the Committee at the end of their tour. Most of the questions were in the nature of leading questions, questions which are not meant to elicit infor-

mation, but to provide cues for the sort of evidence the Committee needed to justify pre-conceived ideas.

About this questionnaire Chief Justice M. Hidayatulla of the Nagpur High Court in the Mandamus petition moved by G. X. Francis challenging the appointment of the Committee, expressed himself as follows in his judgment:

"The questionnaire is indeed a very long and searching document. Every aspect of Christian life and missionary activity is subjected to scrutiny. In many places it amounts to an accusation, though the question is couched as if it asks for information. There are in one or two places unfortunate innuendoes against the Missions. I do not know who was responsible for the questionnaire, but whoever drafted it, apparently did not see the difference between those activities which are permissible and those which are not. Every aspect of missionary activity, good or bad, is subjected to scrutiny. I hope it was done with the intention of clearing misconceptions about missionary activities, and not with the sinister object the petitioner suggests.

"The next batch of questions is about the Pracharaks (i.e. lay helpers). They attempt to discover the qualifications, emoluments and attractions for doing missionary work. . . . There is an innuendo in them that the Pracharaks are paid for making as many converts as they can and that they are rewarded suitably if they succeed well enough. Of course, the methods of Pracharaks can be looked into to find out if they offend against public order, morality and health; but I am not clear how it is the concern of anybody or even of Government if the Pracharaks are paid beyond their worth and are rewarded. That is a matter of the internal administration of Christians themselves who have the liberty to preach their faith to outsiders and can employ such agency as they choose, provided their agents act within the four corners of any regulation made by the State for the preservation of public order, morality and health.

"Then there is a large number of questions which deal with methods of conversion. . . . In connection with these preachings, there are several questions under No. 8, some of which are entirely unnecessary, if we bear the Preamble in mind. For instance, I do not see the sense of an inquiry whether in the propagation of their religion the Christians extol Christianity and Jesus Christ. Of course, anyone who preaches the benefits of his religion is likely to extol his own, and to some extent dispute the truth and efficacy of another

religion. I do not see how propagation of religion can otherwise be carried on, and, as I have shown from Cooley on Constitutional Limitations that within limits, regard being had to the law of blasphemy, profanity, etc., everybody is free to dispute the truth of another's religion. I do not think all sub-questions under No. 8 are really legitimate under the terms of the Resolution. I have already pointed that there is nothing illegal in persuading another to change his religion on the basis of worldly gain. It may be immoral from the ethical standards, but it is not the morality with which the Law concerns itself. . . .

"I do not consider that some of the questions are either in good taste or are designed to further the inquiry ordered by Government. So long as the Constitution lasts, the Christians will undoubtedly be allowed to extol Jesus Christ and their faith, just as everyone else will be allowed to extol his own deities and his own religion. . . .

"In granting freeship or free treatment to a Christian there may be discrimination between one community and another; but I do not find anything in the Constitution which prohibits such preferential treatment. The law contemplates denominational institutions, and so long as the Constitution is what it is, such denominational institutions must continue to exist. . . . Everyone is free to enter a Christian hospital or not; but if he does, he cannot complain that a Christian is given free treatment, and not he.

"There are certain questions which I have said I do not consider to be in good taste. One such question involves an innuendo that the Mission hospitals use poisonous medicines for some wicked purpose. This is question No. 77. I do not know what is the intention underlying the question; but it certainly does not make happy reading in the context in which it occurs.

"The questions dealing with the methods of conversion are numerous. . . . Some of these questions in my opinion border upon an inquisition and may well be equated to a 'fishing expedition' on the supposition that something discreditable may be discovered.

"Some of them are amazing. Question which invites opinion whether different religions in the land can exist peacefully and co-operate in realising a just order of society, is a little too late in the day. We are existing in this vast sub-continent for generations and centuries . . . , but we have done very well together. The Constitution itself guarantees equality of religion and treatment, and it is too late in the day to open

up this vast subject whether different religions can co-exist in our motherland."

If we publish these somewhat long extracts from the judgment, it is partly to give the natural reaction to such a document by the highest judicial authority in the State—there's considerable irony on one Chief Justice sitting in judgment over another—and partly to explain the next step taken by the M.P. Catholics. In the presence of a questionnaire which showed how the mind of this "impartial" Committee worked, Catholic leaders decided to withhold further co-operation and to challenge in the High Court the legality of the Government in carrying on such discriminatory inquiry into merely Christian activities.

Though the petition failed, the Chief Justice holding that Government had powers to investigate into matters which might affect law and order, he nonetheless animadverted on the composition, scope, and method of such inquiry. Said he:

"In making an inquiry into religious faiths, practices and allied matters Government acts under an awful responsibility, not only to itself but also to the citizens of our country. In the choice of the personnel of such a Committee, ambit of the inquiry and the methods adopted by such a Committee, there should be no suspicion that the inquiry is in the interest of any one community or section of the community. It would have been better if Government had ordered a general inquiry into the propagation of religion and put all religious faiths before the Enquiry Committee. Having singled out an enquiry into the methods of Christians and having entrusted the task to the Niyogi Committee, Government should zealously watch that the inquiry is not conducted nor is the report made in such a way as to outrage religious sentiments and religious freedom because the Christians may have no redress and the mischief against them will have been done."

How far the Niyogi Committee conformed to this wise lead may be judged from the outraged protests that broke forth from the Christians of India who found themselves as much in the pillory as the missionaries. As for the nature of the Report, this volume will bear ample evidence.

Though this is a rejoinder to the Niyogi Report, the main aim and purpose of this book is not a rebuttal of the charges made therein. The main purpose is not polemical but apologetic—that is, to enlighten those who may have been misled by the Report, about the doctrines and principles governing the policy and the practice of the Catholic Church in its missionary

activity and in matters like conversion, education, patriotism, and social and charitable work. The publication of the Report affords us a God-given opportunity to contribute to this process of enlightenment, by which, it is hoped, much of the current ignorance, prejudice and misunderstanding may be dispelled, and our fellow-countrymen may have a clearer idea of what Catholicism is and stands for. We are indeed grateful to the Niyogi Committee for this chance. There are evils that come for good. Grateful too, in that they have succeeded in alerting the Christians to the age-old truth that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

The first part of the Book, therefore, is concerned with the elucidation of such questions as: What is Conversion? Why does the Church engage in Missionary activity? What is Tolerance and how far it is right and proper? What is the purpose of Catholic Schools? Why do Christians engage in social welfare work? What is the Church doctrine on patriotism and nationalism? Answers to these and other relevant questions are not spun out of the author's inner consciousness. They are not an expression of his private opinion, which may or may not carry weight or credence. They are the doctrine of the Church as professed throughout the ages, and reiterated in the decrees and declarations of the First Plenary Council of Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of India, held in Bangalore in 1950 (*vide* Appendix I). Incidentally the author tries to meet the various allegations made in the Report, bearing on the subject of conversion and the methods used by missionaries in evangelising. He also deals summarily, and he hopes effectively, with the wonderful discovery by the Niyogi Committee of the American plot to establish a psychological base in India with the aid of missionaries, alleged to be the ready tools of American imperialism, and the unholy combination of the Papacy and the American democracy—"the former to extend its religious empire, and the latter to obtain world leadership" (Niyogi Report, p. 60). Of such stuff is the Report made.

A word about Christian intolerance on which the Report enlarges at great length, making an uncalled-for excursion into the whole history of Christianity down the ages. Now we do plead guilty that at times and in places Christians have displayed religious intolerance and, through misconceived zeal, resorted to persecution which is certainly alien to the religion of love taught by their Lord and Master. But what relevance had all this to the task which was charged on the Committee? And are intolerance and persecution a Christian monopoly?

Who is in a position to cast the first stone? Can Brahminism which is responsible for the inhuman suppression of lower classes, boast of its tolerance? A Congress leader of the first rank, who professes to be a Hindu, has, in commenting upon the Niyogi Report, stated that the lower castes and outcastes of India have, throughout the history of India, tried to escape the tyranny of casteism by becoming Buddhists and Muslims, and that it is no wonder that they try to escape now by becoming Christians. It is useless and unfair, he says, to blame Christian missions for this tendency. The blame lies elsewhere.

The charge of denationalising converts so lightly levelled against Christian missionaries is met in Part I and, more extensively, in Part II by M. Ruthnaswamy (Christianity and Indian Nationalism). So far as the Catholic policy in the Missions is concerned, the charge is baseless. As long back as 1659, when the very word nationalism was unknown, the Holy See issued the following Instruction to the missionaries:

"Do not in any way attempt, and do not on any pretext persuade these people, to change their rites, their customs and their manners, unless these be openly opposed to religion and morality. For what can be more absurd than to drag either France or Spain or Italy or any country of Europe into, say, China? Not your ways but your faith must you bring in, a faith that neither rejects nor offends the ways and customs of any nations, except they be evil, but rather wants them to be preserved in their full and perfect integrity. And since it is but natural to man to esteem and to love most what is his own, and especially his own people's, there is nothing more likely to cause dislike and hatred than the abolition of national customs, especially those whereto they and their ancestors have been used from time immemorial, above all if an attempt be made to substitute to those the customs of another nation. Therefore you are never to compare the ways of these peoples to those of Europe, but rather must you, with all diligence, get yourselves used to the latter. Admire and praise those that deserve praise. And to those that do not deserve it, as you must not extol them as hypocrites would, so you must ever be prudent enough not to pass sentence upon them and still less to condemn them lightly or beyond their deserts. Those finally that are bad, remove them rather by a show of your displeasure and by silence than by words, waiting for opportunities to get rid of them gently and by-and-by when minds are better disposed towards the truth. . . . Keep entirely aloof always from political interests and matters of State, so that you never meddle with the adminis-

tration of civil matters, even though requested and even importuned by many prayers to do so. . . . Let thus all know and proclaim that you seek nothing but spiritual profit and the salvation of souls and that all your labours, desires and thoughts are, all other interests being excluded, entirely concentrated on divine things."

The reader will note the directive not to meddle in politics at all, even when requested or importuned. That this is true of the missionaries working in the tribal areas, subject to the Niyogi Enquiry, is evident from the written directives issued by the Bishop of Ranchi to all missionaries in the area and the assurance given by him to the late Pandit Shukla, Chief Minister, which did not prevent the Committee from charging Catholic missionaries with taking an active part in the Jarkhand movement without an iota of evidence!

In the Second Part of this Book, after Mr. Francis's revelations regarding the genesis and the procedure of the Niyogi Committee, Prof. William Coelho probes into the numerous sources on which the Committee have based their wholesale indictment of Christianity and the Missions. What credence may be given to this may be judged from the manner in which the Committee have handled their material, which is often borrowed from authors who are known to have had a strong bias against Christianity.

In "Christianity and Indian Nationalism", Mr. M. Ruthnaswamy, well-known author and educationist, repudiates the charge that Christianity has denationalised the Christian convert. He also deals with the danger of divided loyalties played up by the Committee.

Prof. M. F. Colaço exposes the general principles governing Catholic education and explains why the Church is so insistent in bringing up Catholic children in Catholic schools. He and Prof. Arokiaswami point out the immense contribution of Christian missionaries to the culture of India, culture being taken in the broadest sense.

Prof. C. D. Pinto disabuses the public mind that the works of charity and uplift undertaken by the Missions are baits for conversion. As he rightly points out, they are the irradiation of the faith into the secular environment, an outward manifestation of Christian love which is all-embracing.

Finally, a noted anthropologist, Fr. M. Hermanns, explodes the theory which on flimsy evidence the Niyogi Report tried to advance that there is hardly any difference between the tribal and the Hindu religion, and that there was no ground to

differentiate between the two. The Report goes so far as to make the missionaries responsible for dividing and isolating the Tribals from the Hindus to serve their own Macchiavelian ends!

The book is written by Catholics, most of whom have been life-long educationists. Their qualification to write on the special subjects they handle is that they are sufficiently informed to be able to express the mind and the doctrine of the Church they belong to, and sufficiently critical-minded to analyse and assess the findings of the Niyogi Report and, on the basis of the information at their disposal, to offer a reasoned, objective, and dispassionate refutation of the various charges and allegations levelled against the Church, the missionaries, and the Indian Christians themselves.

If in this study they have confined themselves to the Catholic Missions and Church, it is not in a spirit of narrow particularism. They have no reason to believe that their observations on the methods used in the Missions are not applicable to Protestant Missions as well. They are convinced that the spirit which moves them all is the same—that of Christ Who wished His message to be conveyed to all nations. If, therefore, they have restricted themselves on the whole to charges against Catholic Missions, it is because they had reliable and accurate information about the working of these Missions only, and they did not wish to go beyond what they could not fully substantiate.

I cannot conclude this Introduction without recording my appreciation and gratitude to the Catholic Association of Bombay which has undertaken the burden and responsibility of this publication, and even more to the friends who, shunning publicity, prefer to remain anonymous, to whose devoted labours and scholarship the present writers owe a good deal of the material on which the various contributions are based.

A. SOARES

Editor

PART I

CONVERSION—MEANS AND ENDS

By

A. SOARES

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CHAPTER I

CONVERSION OR EVANGELISATION?

The aim and purpose of Christian Missionary activity all over the world is said to be conversion. This is wrong. The purpose of Christian Missions is evangelisation, that is to say, the presentation of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Conversion may or may not follow. Conversion, according to the Christian concept, is an act of the individual will, moved thereto by the grace of God which has touched his heart. It is not something imposed from outside. It is something which moves from inside. It is the response of the human heart to the attraction of Christ, his life, his works, his teachings, and his death. The Missionary does not claim to convert a man. That is beyond his power. It is the grace of God acting on a humble and generous heart that effects the conversion. Baptism is the rite, by which the seal of Christ is set on a soul which is already converted, a soul which has turned from the old to the new, which has accepted Christ as the Truth, the Way, and the Life.

The Missionary's task is to bring this knowledge to the people among whom he works. Even when he is approached by a man who professes a desire to become a Christian, he cannot administer the sacrament of baptism unless he satisfies himself that the would-be convert genuinely wishes to be so, and unless he gives him a sufficient grounding in the elements

of the faith. This catechetical instruction lasts for months or even years, and during this probationary period the man is perfectly free to leave off and go his way, if he finds that he has made a mistake or for some reason or other prefers to remain attached to his old religion.

A forced conversion is, therefore, a contradiction in terms. No Catholic priest can baptise a man under coercion of any kind, physical or moral, on pain of sacrilege. This is a part of the theological teaching imparted to future priests in all seminaries. Nor can he, likewise on pain of sacrilege, hold out a mart of souls. He cannot trade souls for material advantages. Souls are not a marketable commodity. No Catholic priest or missionary may hold out material inducements as alleged by the Niyogi Committee, be it grants or loans of money, free teaching or scholarships, free treatment in hospitals or in leper asyla, lure of a job or a wife, as a prior condition to baptism. A prudent missionary, knowing the weaknesses of human hearts, has even the duty of finding out, before he receives a man for instruction in the Christian religion, whether he is moved to it by purely earthly motives. For a man who becomes a Christian for merely temporal advantages, is no Christian at heart. He has made a mockery of the sacrament. He has played a trick on the missionary for his own profit. He is a living fraud. It is men like these who revert to their old religion, when they find they do not secure the benefits they expected. They it is who are then prepared to slander and calumniate the missionaries, being disappointed in their mistaken hopes. Several of them have played this ignoble role as witnesses before the Niyogi Committee. The wonder is that any decent man attaches the slightest value to the evidence of men who, on their own showing, were prepared to barter their birthright for a mess of pottage.

It is astonishing that the members of the Niyogi Committee, honourable men and men of standing, should lend ready ear to all kinds of tales of material inducements, allurements as they are called, from these and other interested parties, I mean people who were interested in discrediting the missionaries, while brushing aside as worthless not only the declarations of the true doctrine of conversion made by the authorities of the various Churches or Missions, but the unanimous declarations of all lay Christians who appeared before the Committee, that, whatever the reasons for their embracing the new faith, neither coercion nor material inducement was the instrument of the missionary in winning them over to Christ. They gave many

reasons for their conversion. I shall refer to them in due course. But the missionaries stood absolved of all discreditable methods alleged against them.

Now the Christians are the most relevant witnesses in the matter, since, according to the charges made, it is they who are the victims of the wiles of the missionaries. But the victims themselves do not complain, nay indignantly repudiate, such charges. Yet all their statements are treated by the judicial-minded Niyogi Committee as things of nought. No credence is attached to them, while every kind of bazaar gossip and every deposition of obviously tutored witnesses is accepted as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Inscrutable are the ways of the Committee. But are they really so inscrutable?

Now the concept of conversion, which I have briefly described, is the actual doctrine of the Catholic Church, which binds everyone, priest and layman alike. Such a concept leaves no room to any of the underhand methods, of which the Committee find the missionaries guilty. The schools, the hospitals, and all other charitable or humanitarian works of mission are not baits to entrap non-Christians into the Church. The fact that such institutions, manned by Religious Orders and Congregations, are working in countries long Christianised, should dispel any such misinterpretation. I shall deal with this question later in general, a detailed examination being left to other chapters of this work, dealing specifically with these aspects of missionary activity.

CHAPTER II

WHY MISSIONS?

What is it that right from apostolic times has led Catholic missionaries to the ends of the world, leaving country, home, family, comfort, wealth, honour and fame, all the things the normal man so deeply prizes—to lose themselves among unknown, often savage, races, braving every kind of pain and discomfort, and even death itself? The calendar of the Church is full of innumerable names of martyrs who have borne witness to Christ with their blood. What do these men and women who have crucified their flesh in life, who have taken the triple vow of poverty, chastity, and utter obedience, expect to gain

for themselves in the mission-field? These are the Catholic sannysis, men who have turned their back on the world for love of Christ and love of their fellow-men, whose life is one never-ending cycle of prayer, contemplation, and loving service. Is it conceivable that such men come out as conspirators and tools of imperialistic powers? This is a hoary accusation, which no reputable historian entertains, but which intelligent people like the members of the Committee find no difficulty in endorsing on no evidence worth the name. But men are so made that they easily believe what they are only too willing to believe, the wish being father to the thought.

It is not that the Committee are unaware of the *raison d'être* of the Christian Missions. "The only motive that brings Christian Missionaries away from their homes to strange lands, is the urge to carry out Christ's command 'Go ye into the whole world and teach all nations all that I have commanded you'" says the Report (p. 122). This is, of course, the view of the missionaries, which the Committee brushes aside unceremoniously. Yet this is the view held by the Christian Church from its very birth.

Missionaries are, by the derivation of the word, men that are sent (Lat-missi). The word apostles has also the same meaning (Greek Apostoloi). Sent by whom? Not by Caesar, but by Christ. What are they sent for? To spread the gospel (good news) and win souls for him. What is our authority for this? No other than Christ himself whose very words are recorded in the various gospels—factual narratives by men who knew Christ personally and had lived and moved with him during the three years of his public life of teaching and preaching.

Here are the last lines of the gospel according to Mathew (Ch. 28, 18-20). It is Christ addressing his apostles:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. You, therefore, must go out, making disciples of all nations, and baptising them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all the commandments which I have given you. And behold I am with you all through the days, until the consummation of the world."

The gospel of St. Mark is no less emphatic on the point (16/15-16, 20):

"Go out all over the world and preach the gospel to the whole of the creation. He who believes and is baptised will be saved; he who refuses belief will be condemned."

"And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord

aiding them and attesting His word by the miracles that went with them."

The Niyogi Report (p. 142) has a very curious passage anent St. John's Gospel: "One fails to see why the introduction of St. John's Gospel in University studies upsets the Universal Church. The Hindu has no objection to the Geeta or the Upanishads being read or studied by anyone in the world. Presumably the fear that may be haunting Western Christianity is that if St. John's Gospel is studied in Indian Universities it will have to face the True Jesus that will be brought to light."

This is an astonishing statement. It starts with an assertion that is entirely devoid of foundation and ends with a conclusion that is equally baseless. I am not aware that the Church, or any Christian for that matter, has any objection to the Johannine gospel being studied in an Indian University or anywhere else. The Bible is public property. Any man can buy a copy in any bookshop and read it to his heart's content. Indeed, no one would be happier than a Christian that, of all gospels, St. John's should be picked up for close study, for it is *the gospel* which brings out most strikingly and luminously the divinity of Christ. "The true Jesus who is brought to light in St. John", is God made man—God incarnate. At least one member of the Committee should know this, though the others must have gone by the report that St. John is a mystic, and, therefore, presumably one nearer to India's mind. Be that as it may, here are some illuminating passages from St. John, quoting in every case Christ's own words:

"Thou (i.e. God the Father) hast sent me into the world on thy errand, and I have sent them (i.e. the Apostles) into the world on my errand." (John 17/18.)

"It is only for them (His missionaries) that I pray; I pray for those who are to find faith through their word; that they may be all one." (John 17/20.)

"I came upon an errand from my Father, and now I am sending you out in my turn . . . when you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven; when you hold them bound, they are held bound." (John 20/21-23.)

It is not, therefore, of their own will, but under Christ's own compulsion that the missionaries go to the ends of the earth, for they have a mandate, which is an inescapable duty, to preach Christ's message "to all nations" (Matthew), "to the whole of the creation" (Mark), to teach, preach, and baptise. For He is the salvation of the world. Mark his words: "He who believes and is baptised will be saved, he who refuses belief

will be condemned." Salvation depends on baptism, but baptism in turn depends on belief. No baptism is valid where there is no belief. And he who wilfully refuses to believe, after he has received the message, whatever his motive may be, intellectual pride or material considerations, such a man stands condemned. For he sins against the light.

This, then, is the charter of the missions, sealed and delivered by the Lord himself. On his apostles and missionaries "till the consummation of the world", has he laid this inescapable burden, which to them is no burden, but a labour of love.

It is well that our countrymen, who do not belong to the faith, may understand this clearly. They will, then, understand why Christian representatives in the Constituent Assembly with one voice insisted that "propagation of faith" should be included among the fundamental rights. For this is an essential part of our religion. They, being intelligent men, entertained no such silly dreams as of Christianistan in India—such an idea could only spring in diseased minds. They were only being true to the ideal of their Master who wanted his light to shine on the whole world. Christ's Kingdom, as he himself declared at the great crisis of his life, is not of this world. And no one, who has any regard for truth, has a right to misinterpret, as the Committee does, that the Kingship of Christ proclaimed by the Church is anything but a spiritual kingdom. No earthly sovereign need entertain any fears or illusions about it. Nor need anyone nurse apprehensions about the dual allegiance of Indian Catholics to Christ and their motherland or Republic, for the two allegiances are perfectly compatible and there can be no clash between them unless the earthly power becomes in effect Satanic, which we have no reason to believe the Indian State will ever be.

But, it may be asked, why do the missionaries interpret this mandate literally? Why do they feel this inner compulsion to carry Christ's message to all nations and races?

The reason is that the Christian believes that the giver of the message is not a mere man, hero, sage, prophet or saint, but God incarnate, God who assumed the human shape of Christ for the redemption and salvation of man—the whole humanity, irrespective of race and clime, till the end of the world.

Now any man who sincerely believes that he is in possession of a truth which will benefit his fellow-men, feels an inner urge to communicate this truth to them, unless he is essentially a selfish man. Generous men will always share with others. This

is true not only of spiritual truth, but of philosophical, scientific, or aesthetic truth. That is why there is the endless clash of ideas going on in the press and on platforms, each trying to convince others of the truth, justice, and efficacy of the ideas he propounds. If man so highly prizes freedom of expression and inter-communication, it is precisely because it enables him to win others to his point of view, be it in politics or economics, science or philosophy. Man is essentially a propagandist.

If he feels this urge on the natural plane, how much greater must be his urge when the truth he wishes to convey is not born in his own mind which is a fallible instrument, but something which he has received from an infallible source, from God who is Truth itself? And how can he egoistically keep that truth to himself when he is assured that it is the saving and redeeming truth, which God Himself wills to be made known to the whole world? This is the true and only explanation of Christian missionary activity from the death of Christ to our own days. There is no need or call to find out other motives, more earthy or material, for this continuous crusade, the peaceful, non-violent crusade for spreading the word of God.

CHAPTER III

THE BASIC QUESTION

The fundamental question is: Is Jesus Christ truly God incarnate? Now we may admit that it is very difficult for the human mind to accept that any man, a finite being, subject to all contingencies of time and space, a creature who is born, grows, and dies, can possibly be an incarnation of God. The Infinite become finite, the Unchangeable become changeable (for growth is change), such a conception is not easily believable by human intellect. The Indian mind may be reconciled to it more easily than the European, for the idea of God taking human shape (*avatar*) is not an alien concept. Yet the fact remains that during these nineteen centuries not only the ignorant and the illiterate have accepted it, but many of the great minds of the world, intellectual giants before whom the members of Niyogi Committee are insignificant pigmies.

It is ridiculous for these members to assert that the missionaries go to the tribals because they expect an easy prey to

their wiles or inducements. They go to them because the gospel is to be preached to all men. Indians in towns of India are by no means unaware of Christ and the gospel. They have at any rate ready means to enlighten themselves on this score. But the tribes in the jungles have never heard of Christ, and it is the duty of the missionary to carry the "good news" to them, whether they be converted or not. For, I repeat, the business of the missionary is to evangelise, to sow the seed. Whether there will be a crop or not, it is not in his hands. It all depends on what kind of soil the seed falls.

As I said, the basic question is of the divinity of Christ. About the existence of Christ, born a Jew in Palestine about four years before the present era who lived for thirty years a hidden life, but who suddenly burst upon the land with wonderful teaching and wonderful deeds and after three years of a crowded life, suffered the ignominious death on the cross about A.D. 29—there is ample historical evidence.

Christ is no myth. In the four Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles there is abundant material to reconstruct historically his life and personality. These are contemporary documents, written by men who had either been eye-witnesses of the events they describe, or like St. Paul, were in direct contact with these eye-witnesses. References to Christ occur also in contemporary historians like the Jew Flavius Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, 3, 3) and the famous Roman Tacitus (*Annales*, XV, 44).

Now Christ claimed that he came from God. Take the texts: "Now this is eternal life that they may know Thee, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom *Thou hast sent*" (John 17/3); "My teaching is not my own, but His who sent me" (John 7/16).

There were in Christ unmistakable signs of holiness and superhuman power. He was, unlike us, sinless. "Which of you," he asks, "will convict me of sin?" (John, 8/46). He had the gift of prophecy: he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and many things about himself and his disciples which proved true, including his own death and resurrection. He was a thaumaturgist, a wonder-worker. To the disciples of John the Baptist who had come to enquire if he was the expected Messiah, he said, "Go and report to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them (Matthew 11/3-5). Add to this the sublimity of his teachings, the gospel of love which he preached and exemplified

in his life, a unique gospel which has revolutionised the world and which is acting as a leaven in the Indian life and thought too, and you have the picture of a unique personality with divine powers.

And this person, so holy and so truth-loving, claimed what no prophet or founder of any religion ever did, yes, claimed to be the Son of God, not in a figurative, but literal sense. "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John, 8/12). He claimed the power to forgive sins (Matthew, 9/6), a power which only God can possess. There is the famous question and answer in Matthew (16/13-19) preliminary to the foundation of the Church, "At that time Jesus came into the quarters of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples, whom do men say that the Son of man is? (Christ often referred to himself as Son of man). And they said, 'Some, John the Baptist, others Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets'. But Jesus saith to them, 'But whom do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'Thou art Christ, the son of the living God.' And Jesus answering, said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father Who is in heaven; and I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

Now this is not the language any mere man could possibly use, unless he was a madman. And no one has yet dared to convict Christ of insanity. 'The powers that he claims and the powers that he delegates to Peter and through him to the Church he is founding, are divine, not human, powers. Christ is not suffering from megalomania, delusions or grandeur, or mental aberrations. His public life and his teachings are there open to scrutiny, and no psychiatrist will ever find any trace of insanity. If, therefore, Christ is not mad, he must be God.

There are many passages in the gospel which tell the same tale. I shall only refer to a striking one in St. John (VIII, 51/59). Jesus upbraids the Jews for their lack of faith, while preaching in the temple. "Amen, amen, I say to you: if any man keep my word, he shall not see death for ever.

"The Jews therefore said: Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest: If any man keep my word, he shall not taste death for ever.

"Art thou greater than our father Abraham who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom dost thou make thyself?"

"Jesus answered: If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say that he is your God.

"And you have not known him, but I know him. And if I shall say that I know him not, I shall be like to you, a liar. But I do know him and do keep his word.

"Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it and was glad."

"The Jews thereupon said to him: Thou art not yet fifty years old. And hast thou seen Abraham?"

"Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you, *before Abraham was made, I am.*" They took up stones to cast at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple."

I have italicised the words: *before Abraham was made, I am*, words which convey the idea of timelessness (note the present tense) which is the attribute of God alone, for whom there is no past nor future, but an eternal present. No wonder that the Jews wished to stone him as a blasphemer who, being a man, wanted to pass off as God.

But this is not all. In the Old Testament there are recorded prophetic sayings of Hebrew seers, Isaiah, Jeremias, Ezekiel, Amos, and others, who longingly looked forward to the coming of the Saviour, the promised Messiah (*Muktidata*). In their writings they described many signs and events which would surely identify him. Now, all these identification marks, written down centuries before the Christian era, find their fulfilment in the life of Christ. It is not possible within the limited range of this chapter to point them out, but I invite the earnest seeker of truth to read the *Pensees* of that great genius Blaise Pascal, easily available in English translation, where he brings out the parallel between the prophetic utterances and the life of Jesus.

But there is final, conclusive, proof of his divinity, in that he prophesied not only his death upon the cross, but his resurrection by his own power on the third day (Matthew 12/38-40; John 2/22, 10/17-18).

The empty grave, though guarded by Roman legionaries, specially placed there at the request of the Jews to prevent his body being snatched away by his disciples, is there as a physical proof. And there are his apostles, disciples, and Mary of Magdala to vouch for this, for they have with their own eyes

seen the risen Lord and conversed, and even broken bread, with him.

After his death the disciples were panic-stricken and tried to hide themselves as best as they could. They were leaderless, helpless, knowing not what to do, where to turn. The sight of the risen Christ turns these moral cowards into valiant heroes, who are prepared to face all the powers and potentates of the world fearlessly. Henceforward, they preach not only Christ crucified, but Christ risen from the dead. "Grave, where is thy victory? Death, where is thy sting?" cries St. Paul triumphantly, St. Paul who, after a shattering spiritual experience, had changed from a persecutor of Christianity into its greatest champion. This truth they were prepared to witness with their blood. This should be enough! For no man is ever willing to give up his life for what he knows to be false—a lie.

Christ the God incarnate, Christ not a myth, nor a legend, nor a symbol, but a historical character, a man yet a God! This is the bedrock on which Christianity stands. But, if Christ is God and God is Truth, then the teachings of Christ logically are marked with the seal of infallibility. Whatever he taught is a revelation from high, and is to be accepted even though sometimes incomprehensible to the human intellect, as for instance the doctrine of Trinity in Unity—Three Persons, yet one God. The human mind has its limitations, and it is often faced with mysteries which are beyond its grasp. Where reason fails, revelation may come to help, and it is through Christ that these mysteries are revealed to man. Christ called himself the *Son* of God come from his heavenly *Father*, and he promised after his glorious ascension to send the *Holy Spirit*, the Spirit of grace and love, to his disciples to fill them with spiritual strength, to turn them from mere weak, sinful men into spiritual giants. This miracle did take place on the day of the Pentecost when the disciples were gathered in the upper room, and tongues of fire rested over them and they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

These are not fairy tales, but recorded facts of history, which were not only set down in writing, but which have been transmitted by uninterrupted tradition from the apostolic times till today. The series of Popes in the Catholic Church runs without any intermission from St. Peter, Christ's companion, to Pius XII, the present Pontiff, and the Church is the bearer of this tradition.

Left to its own devices, the Catholic Church would not ask those whom she wishes to bring into her fold to accept such incomprehensible, I would almost say incredible, doctrines

as that of Trinity or even Incarnation. But the Church has no choice in the matter. She must transmit what she has received from her Founder and Lord—the truth exactly as it has been set forth from the beginning. Not for her to modify, or tamper, or take any liberties with, it. That would be sitting in judgement over God. It would be claiming a higher wisdom than that of God.

I want all my readers, specially those who are not Christians, to consider carefully what follows. Many of the charges about the intolerance of the Catholic Church and about its arrogance, charges which the Niyogi Report makes it a point of reiterating again and again, are based on a complete misunderstanding of the Catholic position.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Religious tolerance is the attitude of mind of the followers of a religion to the followers of other religions, an attitude from which a certain conduct follows in their mutual relations. Such a tolerance may be considered under three aspects: Dogmatic, Civil, and Political. By Dogmatic tolerance is meant the attitude of a religion towards religious truth, or forbearance of an error in so far as it is an error. Civil tolerance is the personal esteem and love we show to an erring individual, even when we condemn or combat his error. Political tolerance is the tolerance which a given State grants to all religions and sects within its territory, whether through its written constitution as in India or through its settled policy as in Britain. Leaving this last type to be treated in a subsequent chapter dealing with the relations between the State and the Church, I shall proceed to state the attitude of the Catholic Church to the other two types, viz. to religious error as such and to those who in her opinion are in error.

Tolerance towards error, in so far as it is proved to be an error, is inadmissible not only in religion, but in any other field, whether it be science, history, or philosophy. In mathematics we do not magnanimously allow anyone to hold that two and two make five or that two sides of a triangle are together less than the third. In every exact science, once definite

truth is arrived at, no one can tolerate error. Any student who in his examination paper relies on relativity of truth, soon finds the error of his way. Fruitless would be his appeal to the tolerance of the examiner. Truth imposes itself, and tolerance of error can only arise from an attitude which is indifferent to truth and which places truth and falsehood on the same level. We cannot be indifferent to truth, whatever that truth may be, religious, philosophical, or scientific. Once we are convinced that we have attained to truth, we are bound, by the law of our nature which derives from God who is Truth itself, to cling to that truth and renounce what goes against it.

One may say that in religion and philosophy it is not so easy to arrive at truth as in mathematics or physics. This granted, still the rule holds that, in so far as one sincerely believes he has come to a particular truth, he cannot cling any more to something which stands in contradiction to it. He would be a living lie. All the more, as religious truth deals with the most profound mysteries of human existence, the relation of man to God, and man's final destiny. In this sense there can be no such thing as tolerance of error.

Love of truth forbids any investigator or researcher from countenancing falsehood, whatever the field he may be working in. Without intolerance of error and single-minded pursuit of truth there would be no progress in any science or any field of human activity. Catholic Church is, therefore, not alone in her stand that, once truth is grasped, anything that contradicts that truth or is in any way opposed to it, cannot be tolerated. She is, like every genuine philosopher, scientist, historian, literary man, or artist, intolerant of error and falsehood.

Civic tolerance is a different matter. Here we are dealing with men who are fallible, but who are yet men like ourselves, our brothers. As such, they must command our affection and esteem even when we heartily disagree with the religious views they hold. The ultimate motive for such tolerance may be sought in the social nature of man. Negatively expressed, it may be based on the precept "do not do unto others what you would not have others do unto you." Positively it may be based on the ethical commandment of love to all men. Love which Christianity raised from the human to the superhuman level, by bidding everyone love his neighbours for the sake of God, because in his neighbour one sees God himself. A Christian is thus bound to love a Hindu or a Muslim or even an atheist, because he is his brother and the image of God. The fact that

he disapproves of some of their religious beliefs or practices, is no reason to withhold his love or esteem from them.

This happy blending of intolerance of error and tolerance of the erring is, according to Newman, the making of a gentleman. This golden mean makes for true magnanimity. Such tolerance is no doubt a difficult thing. But there is no denying that it is one of the most delicate and beautiful virtues. This tolerance is the more praiseworthy in one who is a firm believer in his own faith and who cannot be convicted of religious indifference masked as tolerance, whose cordiality to men of other faiths emanates from neighbourly love and sense of justice. It is an indispensable requisite for maintaining harmony and friendly relations between men of different faiths, and is the root of religious peace and concord in a nation.

We, Catholics of India, are firm believers in this civic tolerance, not out of craven fear that intolerance may recoil like a boomerang on us, but because of the divine precept to love all men. It is not the fear of law which makes Christians law-abiding. It is the spirit of Christ.

India unhappily has been witness to many inter-communal feuds and riots and much shedding of blood. Is it pure accident that Christians have never been involved in them? If today here and there in India incidents are reported of communal aggression affecting Christians, one finds that the Christians are invariably the victims, not the aggressors. The Niyogi Committee are unduly disturbed in their minds when they fear that preaching of Christianity or the policy of conversion may lead to disturbance of peace and communal convulsions. Christianity has been preached and conversions reported in this country for centuries without any such troubles arising. If they do now, it is because there are dangerous elements abroad which seem determined to create trouble for us. Christians, therefore, have a right to protection both from the State and the bigger communities among whom they want to live in peace and amity. Let us practice co-existence at home, before we preach it to the world at large.

CHAPTER V

CATHOLIC INTOLERANCE

Coming back to the central or crucial issue of Catholic intolerance, which annoys so many of our countrymen. The Hindu concept of religion is that it is an individual concern. There are many ways to reach God (Brahman or Parameshwaran) and a man can choose his own: whether the way of knowledge (*jñanamarga*) or liberation through realisation or experience of his being non-different (*ananya*) from the Absolute; or the way of devotion and whole-hearted surrender to God (conceived even as a personal God) (*bakhtimarga*); or the common way (*Karmamarga*) of doing one's duties in the state of life in which one is born and performing the prescribed rites. There is no body of tenets, dogmas, or precepts forming the core of the Hindu religion; no Church or hierarchical structure or external organisation with teaching and guiding powers. Hinduism is not concerned with any particular belief. Whether one believes in an impersonal Brahman, in a personal God, in many gods, or in no god, it is immaterial. Hindu you are and Hindu you remain. This produces a peculiar mentality, mistaken for tolerance, but which is more akin to indifferentism, as if one had given up any possibility of objective truth in religion, leaving each individual to believe or disbelieve whatever he likes. Such a mind finds it very difficult to understand the Christian, and particularly the Catholic, position, which is diametrically opposite.

The Christian position is that, while the earnest seeker of Truth and the loving devotee of God has at various times and places—not least in India—been vouchsafed glimpses of the Infinite Truth, and while in every human soul there are urges which lead it to discover God and to distinguish between the good and the evil—, we call it natural religion found even among the most primitive tribes—, God in His mercy and love has granted a final and complete revelation of spiritual truth, not through man, but through His Son made man. Such revelation is a direct communication from God, and, therefore, not subject to the distortions caused by a purely human agency. Christians therefore cannot but accept Christ's life as the supreme pattern of life and his teachings as the final code of human conduct. It is Christ, not the Church or any priest or missionary who declares "I am the Truth, the Way, and the Life". It is

Christ, not the Church nor the missionary, who has said, "He who believes and is baptised will be saved; he who refuses belief will be condemned". The missionary does not add to, or detract from, Christ's message. He wouldn't dare to. Nor, for that matter, would the Catholic Church. Questions of tolerance and intolerance are irrelevant in this context.

The Church feels bound by the truths taught by her Founder, because she firmly believes, on solid historical grounds, that her Founder is God Incarnate. What Christians believe does not bind those outside the faith. Because we believe that Christ is God, we do not expect others to blindly accept our belief. We humbly invite them to find out for themselves as lovers of truth what truth there is in this belief and why highly intelligent men, nay geniuses of first magnitude, have throughout ages accepted such beliefs which on the face of it seem incredible. But this apart, we want all men of good will for whom this book is written, to see that the Catholic Church, starting from such premises, cannot but come to the conclusion that outside Christ there is no salvation.

It has nothing to do with intolerance or arrogance. Christians are not suffering from a religious superiority complex. The true Christian is always humble. He feels unworthy of the grace (*prasada*) that comes to him not through his own but through Christ's merits. A great truth, a priceless gem, has been his fortune to possess. Does he want to keep it for himself? No; he wishes everyone in the world, high or low, civilised or savage, to share it. For this, like every kind of truth, is not diminished by sharing. Here division and multiplication are one. Christians are not spiritual snobs. How can they be when their divine Master was born like a pauper in a manger and died like a criminal on a cross? The Master who earned his bread with a carpenter's tools and who chose as his comrades fishermen and publicans? The very fact that we want all to be Christians shows that we are not suffering from any such complex. Superiority and equality do not fit in together.

But when we say "outside Christ there is no salvation", do we condemn all non-Catholics to hell-fire? This is the current misinterpretation of the doctrine. No Christian nor the Church has the power to condemn anyone to hell. Nor does any true Christian wish even the deadliest foes of Christianity to go to hell. It is God alone who knows who is saved and who is damned. For He alone looks into the depths of the human heart and discerns the springs of a man's thoughts and actions.

As for the Church, her doctrine in this regard has been

clearly expressed by Pope Pius IX in Encyclical *Quanto afficiamur moerore* (Aug. 1863):

“We all know that those who are invincibly ignorant of our religion and who nevertheless lead an honest and upright life can, under the influence of divine light and divine grace, attain to eternal life; for God who knows and sees the mind, the heart, the thoughts and the dispositions of every man cannot, in His infinite bounty and clemency, permit anyone to suffer eternal punishment who is not guilty through his own fault.”

What does all this amount to? Christ came to the world to show man the divine plan of salvation. But how mankind would know of it, unless there were men to carry the message? So Christ founded the Church and bade her through her missionaries carry the gospel to the ends of the world, so that no one might remain ignorant of His life and teaching. So from the earliest days his messengers spread out through the then known world, and two of them, St. Bartholomew and St. Thomas, even reached India, so that Christianity came to this country not long after Christ's death.

But even after nineteen centuries there are places on earth, where Christ's message has never reached. No Christian believes that they are all lost souls. God will judge them according to the light given to them, dim though that light be.

What about those who have heard of Christ and his message, yet would not follow him? There we must distinguish between those who won't see and those who can't see. They who believe in but will not accept Christ owing to worldly considerations, because, for instance, conversion involves sacrifice, social ostracism, and the like, they would apparently incur Christ's anathema, though their final destiny only God will know. There is such a thing as a death-bed repentance, a final turning to God, what we call the baptism of desire.

But there are others who hear the message, but cannot honestly bring themselves to believe it. These are the men or women who are said to be “invincibly ignorant”. It is to such that the words of Pius IX apply. They may be saved, even though they do not belong to the visible membership of the Church. Nay, even the honest foes and persecutors of the Church may be saved because of this invincible ignorance. Charles Journet, a leading theologian of our times, speaks of them in his *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, p. 39:

“The third attitude is that of men who are aware of the existence and the activity of the Church, but who, far from

seeming to move towards her, show themselves ill-disposed, perhaps oppose her with all their conscious powers, even persecute her, and yet do this because of insurmountable errors for which God does not hold them responsible, sincerely convinced as they are that they work for justice and truth. Their hostility to the Church can co-exist with an authentic movement of faith, working by charity, which attaches them closely to the very Church they detest, but whose sons they already are."

What is the final conclusion regarding tolerance? This may best be expressed in the words of J. Pohle (*Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 767):

"Catholics who are conversant with the teachings of their Church know how to draw the proper conclusions. Absolutely unflinching in their fidelity to the Church as the sole means of salvation on earth, they will treat with respect, as ethically due, the religious convictions of others and will see in non-Catholics, not enemies of Christ, but brethren."

I may now deal summarily with the common charge of spiritual pride, in that we claim that Catholicism is the one true religion, and all other religions are false. This is by no means the correct representation of our position.

First of all, no enlightened Christian can ever utter such nonsense that all other religions are false. No religion which has attained to the knowledge of one God, can be called false. We say, on the contrary, that there is some truth even in the lowest cult or worship, for it is an acknowledgement of the existence of the supernatural. There is a good deal of truth in every great religion and we confess with pride that few have plumbed depths of the Infinite as our own rishis and seers. It would be stupid and presumptuous to label all other religions as false.

Indeed, we go so far as to say that all truth, wherever it may be found, is Christian truth merely because it is the truth. Have not our own Catholic philosophers and theologians appropriated and assimilated whatever true and beautiful and noble they found in Plato and Aristotle? Time I hope is nigh, when we shall appropriate and assimilate all that is pure and sublime in Sankara, Ramanuja, Vallabha, and Madhava.

We do, however, hold that Catholicism is the one true religion, because it was founded by One who is Truth himself. You see, I come back again and again to the same point, the very centre of our faith, Christ, God made man, the sole historical case of divine incarnation.

Once we accept this as the source of our faith and doctrine,

the rest follows. The others need not accept our belief, yet our hope is that they will at least try and understand our position. It is not spiritual pride, still less contempt for other religions, that makes us say that ours is *the one true religion*. We hold that ours, if not the only way of union with God, at any rate is the best and the safest, and this we hold not as a wish-fancy of ours, but on the word and assurance of the Lord. Yes, the safest, because we possess in the sacraments effective means to obtain divine grace, whereby we may finally attain to the vision of, and union with, God (Brahman).

CHAPTER VI

PROSELYTISM

If we look up a dictionary, we find that proselyte means "a convert from one opinion, belief, or religion into another". In itself the word carries no evil undertones. There is nothing mean or wrong in trying to win a man over to one's way of thinking. No one, for instance, objects to political canvassing or commercial advertising. No one questions the propriety or usefulness of ways of influencing people, by word of mouth or by written word, by pictures or dramas or exhibitions or any other method which is legitimate or lawful, so long as the person who is to be influenced remains perfectly free to accept or reject what is brought to his attention. Every propounder of a new idea or scheme is in this sense a proselytiser, whether it be Mahatma Gandhi preaching the doctrine of Ahimsa or Albert Einstein propounding the theory of relativity.

If by proselytism is meant the preaching and advertising of the gospel by every legitimate means, then the Catholic Church pleads guilty to the soft impeachment. Not only *may* she do it, but she *must* do it as an inescapable command of her divine Founder. She exists for no other purpose. This is her primary mission, to which all the other activities are subsidiary.

Unfortunately, the word proselytism has acquired a bad connotation. It means the advertisement of one's beliefs and the winning over of people by unscrupulous methods, as if the end justified the means. Conversions brought about by force, fraud, undue influence, or material inducements are held to be the distinctive marks of proselytism. I have said it before and

repeat it here that the Catholic doctrine does not countenance such conversions, and, indeed, repudiates them, as contradicting the exalted concept Catholicism has both of man's free will and of the sacred and sacramental nature of the act of faith leading to baptism.

According to Catholic theology God himself has given man the gift of freedom of will, whereby he is free to choose his way of life, free to be a saint or a villain, free to work out his salvation or perdition. It is a terrible gift. None the less, man's free will is inviolable. If even God does not interfere with it, much less has man or the Church the right to do so.

Likewise, it is the Catholic doctrine that a conversion which does not come from the heart, as a result of a man's free will, is no conversion at all. I could quote many authorities in support of this statement. Suffice that of the present Pope Pius XII, who has reiterated "the unvarying doctrine of the Apostolic See" (Rome) in his Encyclical *Mystici Corporis*:

"While we desire prayers to go up unceasingly to God from the whole Mystical Body (i.e. the Church) that all those who are astray may as soon as possible enter the one fold of Jesus Christ, we declare that it is absolutely necessary that this should come about by their free choice, since no man believes unless he is willing. Wherefore if any persons, not believing, are constrained to enter a Church, to approach the altar, and to receive the sacraments, they certainly do not become true believers in Christ, because that faith without which it is impossible to please God, must be the perfectly free homage of intellect and will. Should it, therefore, at any time happen that, contrary to the unvarying doctrine of this Apostolic See, a person is compelled against his will to embrace the Catholic faith, we cannot in conscience withhold our censure. But this very fact that men have free will and are able, under the influence of passion and evil desire, to abuse their freedom, makes it needful for them to be drawn effectively to the Truth by the Father of lights through the Spirit of His beloved Son."

This may be the invariable doctrine of the Church, one may say. But what about the practice? One may always work up a theory in self-defence, but how does this theory stand in the light of history? This query is all the more relevant, as the Niyogi Committee have thought it necessary to make an excursion into the whole history of Christianity and show it up as an intolerant and persecuting faith. The proof of the pudding, it may well be said, is in the eating thereof. How then does Christian practice match Christian doctrine in this regard?

It is impossible in this short publication to review in any detail the history of the Church and its expansion in the world. Only summary indications will be given to show that the practice of the Church has been generally in conformity with the theory down the centuries.

But, in order to clear the ground, a preliminary remark is necessary. The Church as an institution claims a divine origin, being founded by Christ. But it is at the same time a human organisation. It is made up of men—men who live in their historical context, who are influenced in their behaviour by the beliefs and practices of their times; men who in their individual capacity or even in their official capacity are not only liable to error, but actually may be acting in a given contingency contrary to the thought and directives of the Church, to which they belong. That Christians have throughout these nineteen centuries been acting at times in an unchristian manner, is undeniable. Yet that is no reason to attribute the responsibility of their actions to Christianity. They do so act, not because of, but in spite of, their Christianity. The Church may be held responsible for such actions of men, whether ecclesiastic or lay, as she has approved or condoned. Abuses and aberrations there may have been in the course of history, which we shall be the first to acknowledge and deplore, if they are proved on sufficient evidence. For it is no less true that throughout the ages unwarranted charges and false accusations—the Niyogi Report is the latest instance—have been levelled against both the Church and the missions, which have been accepted at their face value by chroniclers and repeated by historians, one after another. As Lytton Strachey says: history does not repeat itself; historians repeat themselves.

CHAPTER VII

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

In the first period of Christian expansion, ending about A.D. 500, conversion was inevitably a matter of free acceptance. During this period Christian missionaries travelled over the whole of the Roman Empire and even the regions beyond (e.g. India, Persia). They were not in a position to use force, influence, or any material inducements. The Christians were,

on the contrary, subjected to intense pressure and persecution, and thousands of them endured torture and martyrdom for their faith. The dominant powers were hostile to them. The Christians were falsely accused of all kinds of enormities, atheism, immorality, child sacrifice, magic. They were also considered a danger to the society because a large number of converts were from among slaves—the poor and the suppressed have always been the first to be attracted to the gospel of love and human dignity. They were likewise accused of being disloyal and, if we may use a modern term, anti-national, because they refused to worship the Roman Emperor, which was a pledge of loyalty. The Christians were very loyal to the State, an injunction laid upon them by St. Peter and St. Paul and their successors. But they could not give to Caesar what was only meant for God. They were what we now call conscientious objectors. Worship of Rome or the Emperor was idolatry, and they were prepared to give up their life rather than betray the true God.

Eventually the new faith not only survived the trials and persecutions, but won over the majority of the people in the Empire, both the Western and the Eastern. It was a case of the survival of the fittest. It was not only the sublimity of its teachings that attracted the masses and classes, but the exemplary life of the Christian converts, including those of servile status. Towards the end, when the Emperors themselves became Christians after Constantine, it is possible that the imperial example influenced many of the subjects, but the whole movement was a free movement. Coercion of any kind had no place in it. Indeed, it triumphed over coercion applied to it by the powers that be.

The Western Empire, as is well known, collapsed about A.D. 450 as a result of continual attrition caused by barbarian raids. Until such times as the invading hordes had settled down and evolved steady government, confusion and anarchy prevailed over Western Europe and North Africa. It was the Church which kept order and cohesion in this chaos and saved civilization, including the pre-Christian Roman and Greek cultures. This is generally acknowledged. The Church was the one beacon of light illumining the Dark Ages of Europe. What is more important and relevant to our purpose, is that the barbarian rulers and their hardy followers were gradually won over to the faith, so that in the course of the next two or three centuries the whole of Western Europe was christianised.

The barbarians were the ruling elements. They were the men in power. Their conversion, therefore, could not be the

result of any coercion or undue influence. It is not only the beauty of Christ that lured them to baptism, but the calm, courage, and dignity of Popes and bishops, and the grandeur and solemnity of the Church rituals. Once these barbarian rulers were baptised, their subjects were apt to follow their example, but, even then, they were not baptised *en masse* without further ado. They were instructed in the elements of the faith, before baptism was administered.

It is, however, probable that the zeal of some of the rude kings outran prudence and tolerance, as for instance, that of Charlemagne who is said to have imposed Christianity on the Saxons whom he had conquered. This is a case when the Emperor tried to be more zealous in religion than the Pope. In this, however, he did not represent the mind of the Church. During the Middle Ages the whole of Western Europe was christianised. During this period ending about A.D. 1450, the influence of the Church is very great not only in the life of the people, but even over the rulers, who accepted the spiritual supremacy of the Church. There is during this period a close State-and-Church relation, partly because ecclesiastics occupied high places in the civil hierarchy, being the most educated and intelligent men of the times. There is now no question of conversion, but only of defending the common faith against foes from inside and outside.

The external foe was the rising Islamic power, which had overrun the Eastern Empire and had captured Palestine, including the holy City of Jerusalem. That the sepulchre of Christ should be in the hands of infidels and that these should lord it over the places consecrated by the life and passion of Christ, was intolerable to the Christian mind of the time. Hence the Crusades, which were either initiated or supported by the Church. The aim of the Crusades was by no means the conversion of the Saracens. It was the recapture of the Holy Places. This was the religious motive, but there was also a political motive which influenced European rulers. It was to stem the tide of Arab conquest which threatened to overwhelm Christendom.

The foes from inside were the various heresies that arose in several parts of Europe like the Albigensians in Southern France, the Hussites in Bohemia, the Lollards in England. All these were considered to be subversive not only of Christian faith and unity, but also of the social order and ethical norm of the respective countries. So the Church and State combined to suppress them. The Church used the method of persuasion

and preaching to win them over, the Dominicans being specially commissioned to convert the Albigensians. But the Church also set up the Tribunal of the Holy Office, better known as the Inquisition, to investigate heretical beliefs and practices and to hand over those found guilty to the secular power for punishment.

The Inquisition has become a byword for bigotry, intolerance, and cruelty. Let me at once acknowledge that the method of eliciting truth, viz. torture, used by the Inquisition is abominable and hardly conducive to the finding of truth. But this was not a speciality of the Inquisition. It was a method universally adopted in the Middle Ages and even in modern times in judicial proceedings. It was by no means peculiar to the Inquisition. The men who used this savage method were the men of their times, and it is only the rise of more humane or civilised sentiments in the latter days that makes us look with horror at torture as an ordinary method of judicial procedure.

We may, however, usefully remember that, while torture has disappeared from the law courts, it is still practised in a modified form by the police in their investigations. The use of what is called third-degree methods is by no means uncommon in highly civilised countries, while torture of a subtler and deadlier kind, called brain-washing, is today the product of Chinese ingenuity.

As for the intolerance of heresy in the mediaeval times, we can hardly understand it, unless we realise what heresy meant to the minds of those days. The Middle Ages were the ages of profound, integral, faith. Christianity was accepted implicitly and unquestioningly as the supreme truth. The conduct of mediaeval man, even of ecclesiastics, often fell far short of what was expected from a follower of Christ, but their faith was adamant. They looked upon heresy with the same horror on the spiritual plane as they looked upon leprosy on the physical plane. Heresy was the leprosy of the soul, and every method, however drastic, was to be used to protect the Christian community from its deadly contagion.

Christians today who live in communities where men follow various religions or none, where men may freely call themselves rationalists, positivists, and agnostics, can hardly conceive the feelings of the mediaeval man towards a heretic, a man who, though given the privilege of fellowship with Christians and the grace of Christ's redemption, yet cut himself off deliberately from the fellowship and tried to tear the seamless robe of Christ. Heresy was of the brood of Satan, and, therefore, a thing to be

mercilessly extirpated. It was the same feeling that till comparatively recent times led to the burning of so-called witches, as persons in league with the devil.

I am not trying to condone or justify the treatment of heretics in those days, but merely to explain the kind of mentality that was engendered by the ardent faith of the times, which led to this explosion of intolerance. If this is difficult even for Christians of our days to understand, it is all the more difficult for the Hindu mind which is essentially undogmatic in religious matters, and willing to allow of the largest possible latitude.

Add to this that the heresies of those days tended to be politically radical and subversive of the established social order, and one can well understand why the State took an active hand in extirpating movements which might be deemed essentially religious. Both the State and the Church felt menaced by these heresies, and their extirpation was considered a matter of mutual security. The heresy was a treason against God and treason against the King, and punishable on both counts.

The Inquisition was, as its very name shows, the body that investigated the charge of heresy, and on finding the charge established on matters of faith which fell within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, handed over the culprit to the civil power to pass the relative sentence and to execute it, which was usually the burning at the stake for contumacious heretics, i.e. for heretics who would not retract their opinion. For the main purpose of the Inquisition was not to punish, but to wean the accused from his false and dangerous opinions. The argument ran thus: "Apostasy and heresy are, as criminal rebellions against God, far more serious crimes than high treason or murder. But, according to St. Paul, secular authorities have the right to punish specially grave crimes with death; consequently, heretics may not only be excommunicated but also justly put to death." In our present climate of thought the argument sounds unconvincing, but not so to the mediaeval mind.

During the Middle Ages the only persons who did not belong to the faith were the Jews. Now the Jews suffered great persecution in those days. The mass of the people disliked them, partly because they were of the race that had killed Jesus, and partly because they indulged in usurious dealings. The money-lender is never a *persona grata* in any community. The kings and lords also, while giving them some protection, were prone to squeeze them of their surplus wealth at need. Their greatest protectors, however, were the Popes, who assured them freedom to profess and practise their religion.

As early as A.D. 598, Pope Gregory the Great clearly laid down that the Jews, while they were to be restrained from presuming upon the toleration accorded to them by law, had a claim to be treated equitably and justly. They were allowed to keep their own festivals and religious practices, and their rights of property, even in the case of their synagogues, were to be respected (Gregory Mag., *Regesta*, M.G.H. II, 67 and 363). In the later Middle Ages there may be traced through a long series of pontificates the repeated confirmations of the Bull, assignable probably in the first instance to Pope Calixtus II, and known as *Sicut Judaeis*.

After referring to certain words of Gregory the Great, above mentioned, the Bull goes on: "We, therefore, although they prefer to continue in their hardness of heart rather than be guided by the hidden meaning of their prophets to a knowledge of the Christian faith, do nevertheless, since they invoke our protection and aid, following in the footsteps of our predecessors, extend to them the shield of our protection". The document then lays down that "the Jews are not to be compelled by force to embrace Christianity, but are only to be baptised of their own free will; that, apart from a judicial sentence in a court of law, no one is to injure them in life or limb, or to take away their property, or to interfere with such customary rights as they may have enjoyed in the places where they live; that they are not to be attacked with sticks and stones on the occasion of their festival celebrations, nor are they to be compelled to render any feudal services beyond such as are customary; that their cemeteries in particular are not to be violated". (Thurston, *Cath. Encyclopaedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 762.)

And Thurston adds the further comment: "This charter reissued and confirmed as it was by some twenty or thirty pontiffs during a period of 400 years is certainly of much more weight in laying down the Church's view on the duty of toleration as an abstract principle than any persecuting edicts evoked by special circumstances or coloured by the prepossessions of the individual legislator."

The Jew, as I mentioned above, was the only non-Christian element in Mediaeval Europe. He belonged to a small, hated and helpless minority. His survival as a religious sect through a period of ardent faith and relative intolerance, is the best evidence that conversion was never a matter of coercion.

CHAPTER VIII

MISSIONARY EXPANSION

We now come to the most relevant part of our story—that of missionary expansion which began in the 16th century with the opening of the new worlds in the East and the West through the maritime enterprise of Portugal and Spain. Protestantism had split up European Christianity into two fiercely antagonistic parts. The old unity in Catholic faith which, despite civil commotions and inter-State wars, had in the Middle Ages bound all the peoples of Western and Central Europe, had been shattered. The Church found in the newly discovered lands new worlds to redress the balance of the old. So wherever the Spanish and Portuguese galleons went, the Catholic missionaries followed.

The motives, however, were different. The Catholic kings of Portugal and Spain in sending Vasco da Gama or Christopher Columbus overseas intended merely to find a sea-route to the spice lands of the East—the discovery of America was only incidental to this quest—a sea-route in lieu of the old land-routes which were in the main blocked by the rising Turk power. It was also their aim to break the erstwhile monopoly of most valuable Eastern trade long held by Venice, Genoa, and Pisa. They wanted to bypass the Mediterranean, and find a trans-oceanic route to India and the Spice Islands.

But these Catholic nations were also filled with a crusading zeal, which had been fired by their successful rebellion against the Moorish Kings who had for centuries ruled over them. They felt that one of the duties devolving upon them as Christian nations was to help in evangelising the new countries, opened to the West, by the sea-captains.

So we find as a part of the Portuguese and Spanish colonial policy, unlike that of the later Dutch or British policy, an attempt to lend State support to the evangelisation of the newly-discovered lands. The Church and the State were to co-operate in the preaching of the gospel and in the christianisation of the new lands. Hence arose the peculiar system, known as the right of Patronage. The Pope assigned to the two Catholic nations exclusive areas for evangelising, and gave them certain rights and privileges in appointment of bishops, establishing benefices, etc., while the two nations assured support and protection to the missionaries in the new mission-field.

There was a two-fold element in this Western expansion: a spiritual element, the spreading of the faith, which alone was the interest of the Church, and a material element,—trade and colonies,—which was the main interest of the States. Because both were pursued at the same time and because in the spiritual sphere the civil and the ecclesiastical powers worked hand-in-hand, there has been a confusion of the issues and grave misunderstandings. It is generally surmised that the two formed a mutual benefit society, the State supporting the missions and the Church backing up the new imperialism. This is wrong.

The true doctrine of the Church is summed up in the following quotation of St. Thomas Aquinas (13th century) whose philosophy and theology are standard text-books in all Catholic institutes and seminaries:

“No king, nor emperor, nor even the Roman Church (i.e. the Pope as the spiritual head of Christendom) has any right to make war on the pagans, to take possession of their lands or to subject them temporarily. No pretext for a just war is here discoverable, since Jesus Christ, to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth, did not send soldiers or armies to conquer the world, but holy preachers, like sheep among wolves. And so, even under the Old Law (Old Testament), though that was the time of armed conquest, I do not see that any war was declared against any people simply because they were infidels. . . . We should therefore sin grievously if we undertook to spread the faith of Christ by such means. Not only should we not be legitimate masters of the peoples thus conquered, but we should be bound to restitution like all those who have unjustly occupied and conquered a country. We must send to these peoples, not conquerors who oppress them, scandalise them, enslave them, but holy preachers capable of converting them to God by their prayer and their example” (St. Thomas, II, II, 9.66, a.8).

That the Christian States paid little attention to this crystal-clear doctrine, is unfortunately too true. There would be no such thing as imperialism, if St. Thomas's voice was heeded. Unable now to control the policies of even Catholic nations, as she did to a great or less extent in the Middle Ages, the Church tried to the best of her power to correct the abuses of the new colonialism.

We have an instance in the letter of Pope Paul III to Emperor Charles V, commending him for “prohibiting all his subjects by public edict from bringing the Western and Southern

Indian (American) into slavery or depriving them of their possessions". The Pope goes on:

"These Indians, although they live outside the bosom of the Church, nevertheless are they not to be deprived of their possessions, since they are human beings and consequently capable of faith and salvation. They are not to be destroyed by slavery, but to be invited to better life by preaching and example. Furthermore, desiring to repress the shameful deeds of such wicked men and to ensure that the Indians are not alienated by injuries and punishments so that they find it more difficult to embrace the faith of Christ, we lay it as a charge and command by this present letter upon your circumspection, that either by your own action or by that of others you provide to all the aforesaid Indians the help of an effective defence in the matters referred to previously; and we enjoin that you very strictly forbid all and sundry of whatever dignity, position, condition, rank and excellence, to bring the said Indians into slavery in any way or to dare to deprive them of their possessions in any manner under pain, if they do so, of incurring thereby excommunication 'latae sententiae', from which they can only be absolved by ourselves or the Roman Pontiff reigning at the time, except if they are at the point of death and have previously made amends." (J. B. Morral, *Church and State throughout the Centuries*, p. 197.)

In the East, the Portuguese control and influence on land were confined to certain coastal towns and some islands. But the missionaries spread themselves all over the lands, finding their way far into the interior, showing thereby that they stood in no need of protection of colonial powers, and that their mission was not linked up with colonialism. They went even to the otherwise forbidden lands of Japan and China, where foreign influence and protection were entirely unavailable.

Indeed, where the missionaries were left to their own devices and were free from official interference, they did wonderful work, which every sociologist admires, as in the famous Reductions of Paraguay, native self-governing settlements which, while they lasted, seemed almost the realisation of a Utopia.

CHAPTER IX

CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

Christianity is as old in India as the apostolic times. The old Christians on the Malabar coast trace their conversion to the Apostle St. Thomas, who, tradition has it, actually laid down his life in India. These Christians, however, while maintaining their identity through the centuries, never expanded beyond their original habitat.

The modern expansion of Christianity in India begins with the arrival of the Portuguese in the Malabar coast. The ships that were sent out to trade carried also missionaries, whose object was evangelisation. This was due to the lively interest taken by the Portuguese Kings in the spreading of Christianity, interest which was enhanced by the discovery of old Christians in Socotra and Malabar. Indeed, the Portuguese at first were liable to see Christians in all who were not Muslims—their hostility was aimed at Moslems throughout, not at Hindus. Vasco da Gama's first group to land at Calicut mistook two Hindu temples as Christian Churches and even prayed to a statue as Mary, when they heard it called Marian.

The real expansion began with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in 1541. Though clothed with the dignity and authority of the Papal Nuncio, Xavier went about his duties like a humble priest, preaching, teaching, nursing the sick, leading a simple and austere life, setting an example of sacrifice and holiness which attracted all bystanders. He was the first to see the need of a native clergy to spread the faith—Set an Indian to catch an Indian, so to say. So he transformed the Seminary of Santa Fe in Goa into a nursery of Indian clergy. It is wrong, or at least highly exaggerated, to say, as the Niyogi Report does (p. 36), that Xavier thought "that the only hope of increasing the number of Christians was by the use of the secular power of the State".

There is no doubt that he often wrote to the King upbraiding the niggardliness of the funds placed at the disposal of the missions. The Kings by their agreement with the Pope (the right of *Padroado*) had bound themselves to lend the necessary material support to the missions in the East, and Xavier complained that this help was not forthcoming to an adequate extent. The money, by the way, was used for support of mis-

sionaries, building of churches, etc., and by no means to buy up converts.

On two occasions he also besought the aid of the secular arm, once against a local Chief in the Fishery Coast who, being in league with Mahomedan traders, was harrassing the christianised fishermen and trying to reduce them again to their old slavish state, and once against the Raja of Kotah in Ceylon who, after holding out hopes of becoming Christian, had suddenly changed his mind and started a bloody persecution of Christians, not sparing even one of his sons who had become Christian. Two other sons of the Raja had escaped and brought the news to Xavier, asking for help, and it was to defend the local Christians that Xavier demanded help from the secular arm. In either case there was no question of using force to make conversions, but merely to defend the poor Christians from oppression by their overlords. The important point to note is that in neither case did Xavier secure the required aid, the Portuguese being more busy gathering money than protecting converts. So much for the famous secular arm.

The fact is that St. Francis had to accept the conditions in which he had to work. He had not come to India on his own. He could not follow an independent policy; the work of evangelisation was associated with the trading and other activities of the Portuguese. He found himself constantly hamstrung and handicapped by the acts of omission and commission of the Portuguese authorities in the East, and his letters are filled with bitter complaints about their neglect of the missions and their dissoluteness and rapacity, which seriously undermined the prestige of Christianity in the East. The Portuguese were anything but a credit to the religion. That is why he preferred to leave the places within Portuguese control or influence, and seek new fields in Japan, where he established very fruitful Christian nuclei by means which could not but be purely apostolic. That is also why he was trying all by himself to enter the forbidden region of China when death overtook him in Sanchan near Hong-Kong.

There is no doubt that some of the methods adopted by the Portuguese authorities savoured of intolerance and discrimination. Thus Christians were enjoined by the King to be given special privileges and preferments in offices, which might act as a material inducement for worldly minded men to change their religion. What is worse, orders were sent to abolish all public worship of idols in lands which were subject to the Christian King, as it was held that countenancing of the worship of idols

was an insult to the true God. The result was that in the few places where the Portuguese had established themselves, for instance in parts of present Goa or in the neighbourhood of Bombay, Hindu temples were razed to the ground. But such things happened only in a few settlements.

This, however, does not mean that Hindus were forcibly converted or forced into exile. Private worship was not interfered with, and many Hindus continued to reside and earn their living in Goa and other settlements. Apart from local Hindus, François Pyrard who stayed in Goa from 1608 to 1610 mentions numerous Banias of Cambay and Surat there, evidently come as traders or merchants.

As for the policy of the Church, it was defined in the First Council of Goa where the ecclesiastical authorities issued the directive:

“Infidels should not be converted by force, threats or intimidation, but by means of preaching, good services and favours. Without reason the prejudices of caste should not be attacked” (Quoted by A. Brou: *Saint Francis Xavier*, p. 26).

This apart, in the vast mission-field in India which was covered by the various Religious Orders which worked in India during the 16th and 17th centuries, conversion was not, and could not be, a matter of pressure of any kind by the secular power.

The Niyogi Report (p. 38) itself confesses that in the course of two centuries “a network of Roman Catholic missions was spread all over India, from Tibet to Cape Comorin and from Punjab to Assam”. Among the places where Christian centres had been established were counted Agra, Delhi, and Lahore which were at the time directly under the Mughal rule, Akbar and Shah Jehan having welcomed Jesuit Missions to the Court. It is clear, therefore, that the vast increase in Mission activities in India even during the Portuguese heyday was in places which were beyond the reach of the Portuguese arm, and the numerous conversions could not be attributed to methods other than apostolic.

A striking instance is that of the well-known Mission of Madura, to which the Niyogi Report makes a reference (p. 37). Here the famous Robert de Nobili and his no less famous assistants John de Britto and Beschi adopted a method by which they hoped to reach the Brahmins and other high castes who were repelled from Christianity by habits and ways of life which had nothing to do with the faith. He and his followers tried to show that Christians could adopt the life of Sanyasis and

yet remain Christians. He cut himself off from the hated Portuguese, made himself familiar with Sanskrit and Tamil and with the Hindu Shastras, put on the yellow robe, gave up the European food and style of living—in short, he became a thoroughly naturalised Indian. His idea was not to deceive the Brahmin—for he made no secret that he was a Christian and the Brahmins were no fools—but to establish contacts, whereby he might be able to enter into fruitful discussions which might eventually lead to conversion. The method proved successful, and by 1644 in Madura alone 4,150 conversions had taken place among Brahmins and other high castes. The approach here was both intellectual and spiritual and there was no temporal inducement of any kind. Yet these high caste Hindus who were cognisant of their own metaphysics accepted Christianity on merits, just as high caste Bengalis accepted Protestantism in numbers in the 18th century, likewise on merits, leading to such religious reform movements in Hinduism as that of Brahmo Samaj.

If missionary expansion owed comparatively little to Portuguese secular power, it could owe nothing to the Dutch and British secular powers that followed Portugal. They were Protestant and had not much love lost for Catholicism. The British, to give them their due, adopted an attitude of neutrality—live and let live, fair field and no favour,—but the Dutch launched a severe persecution in Malabar and Ceylon not only against the Portuguese missionaries but against native Christians as well.

The decay of the Portuguese power and its inability to lend financial support to the missions led Rome to withdraw most of the missions in the East from the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Padroado and to place them under a special Congregation, that of Propagation of Faith, directly under the control of the Roman See, which would be free from all association with colonial Powers. Today no mission in India has any connection with Portugal. It is under the impulse given by the new Congregation that Catholicism has made the progress it has achieved in the 19th and 20th Centuries in India. Catholic dioceses under bishops, the majority of them now being Indian, are established all over India, and Catholic missions are working in all parts, including, of course, the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh.

I may mention incidentally that foreign Catholic missionaries belong to a variety of nations, Belgium and Holland, France and Italy, Germany and Spain, Ireland and Britain,

Canada and U.S.A., bearing witness to the supra-national nature of the Church. They are men, who as a rule have cut off their connection with their countries, except for a rare visit, and who intend to live and die in India. I may refer to the case of an old Italian missionary who had been repatriated by the British Government in India after the last war. He was a man in seventies, who had spent a lifetime in a mission in Hyderabad. Instead of being happy to come back in his old age to his native land, his one longing was to return to Hyderabad and spend his last days in his beloved mission. He begged me to use whatever influence I had to get him back to the land of his adoption. This is the spirit which animates Catholic missionaries working here. The very fact that they belong to so many different nations should be a guarantee that their activities have no political or nationalistic colouring.

The methods of evangelisation followed by the various missions are the same everywhere, and it is curious that only in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh should they have come under the grave suspicion of the authorities and have incurred the severe strictures of the Niyogi Committee. I shall probe into this curious phenomenon in due course.

CHAPTER X

MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

Missionaries, whether Catholic or Protestant, whether foreign or indigenous, devote themselves not only to the preaching or teaching of the gospel—this is the real meaning of the evangelisation—but to many social and charitable works. They open and maintain numerous schools, colleges, and vocational institutes, hospitals and dispensaries, orphanages and poor-houses, rescue-homes and leper asylas, and beneficent institutions of every kind, including co-operative societies and village settlements.

It is generally acknowledged—and even the Niyogi Committee pays its tribute (p. 133)—that immense good has been and is being done to the country, specially the submerged classes, by Christian missions. According to the Niyogi Report “from January 1950 to June 1954 a sum of Rs. 29.27 crores had been received in India” by missions from foreign countries. All this

amount was spent in maintaining the thousands of institutions, including churches, dotted all over the country. But the main beneficiaries were Indians, both Christians and non-Christians, for it is no secret that the various educational and welfare institutions are open to all, irrespective of creed.

Now any nation might be grateful for all these works, which normally would have to be undertaken by the State authorities, and would probably have cost more and yielded smaller results, since State servants are not *ex hypothesi* moved by the spiritual motives that inspire missionaries in their work. Mr. B. G. Kher, late Chief Minister of Bombay, once told me how a leper home in the State was mismanaged and the whole work was carried on in a mechanical, soulless manner by paid Indian personnel, but what wonderful transformation there was when Catholic nuns were put in charge.

Yet the Niyogi Committee look upon all such activities with jaundiced eyes. They make no secret of their conviction that these works are not carried in a disinterested spirit, but are used as baits to catch the ignorant and the unwary or as material inducements for a change in religion. All these undertakings, according to them, have an ulterior motive, viz. conversion. I need not quote chapter and verse. The whole Report and the final recommendations are based on this assumption.

The Hindu concept of religion is purely individualistic. It is essentially a relation between the individual self (*atman*) and the Self, the Absolute (*Brahman*). The final liberation—the breaking of the endless wheel of Karma—can only be achieved by each individual by his own conduct or endeavours, even though many Hindus believe they may be aided by the grace of God (*prasada*). The human body and material values are essentially, if not evil, at least an impediment to salvation since they are matter (*prakrita*) and illusion (*maya*), bearing an appearance of reality owing to cosmic ignorance (*avidya*). The result of this individualistic concept is that Hinduism, as I have pointed out, has never evolved an external organisation or a Church with a hierarchic organisation or an authoritative teaching body. One result of such a concept is that nobody can define Hinduism, or state what tenets or doctrines are included in the term.

The other result is that Hinduism carries no social implications or responsibilities. Hinduism, as a religion, is not concerned with the whole man in his social setting. It is concerned solely with what may be called the immanent spirit. In such a religious concept, still further limited by caste restrictions, one

cannot expect the religion to include in its ambit social welfare, social justice, secular (as opposed to Vedic) education, care of the sick and uplift of the outcastes. No doubt, we have now the Ramakrishna Missions and the Gandhian institutions for the Harijans, but all of these are the result of the Christian impact and influence which has in many ways permeated Hindu thought and society. No one can claim that the present-day Welfare State has its roots in Hinduism. It is the fruit of modern Western humanitarianism which itself has sprung from Christian roots.

The Catholic concept of religion is radically different.

Catholicism is not merely a set of dogmas and doctrines, or a system of philosophical and theological concepts, or a code of ethical norms, or a sum of rites, practices and devotions. It is all this. But it is much more. Essentially, Catholicism is a *life*, starting in this world with all the human values, material, intellectual, and spiritual, affective and rational, individual and social, whether belonging to temporal welfare or eternal salvation—a life which grows into an after-life, eternal, for which the temporal life is but a preparation. The Catholic does not despise the body, but on the contrary looks upon it as the temple of the Holy Ghost. Man with all his human needs and social relations, his human aspirations and worldly problems, is integrated in Catholic life. Catholicism cannot, therefore, ignore the material needs and welfare of men.

Man, according to our faith, is not a pure spirit, but a complex of body and soul, set in a social milieu, with necessary relations with his fellows. Catholicism, therefore, deals with the whole man, socially integrated. Catholicism is not an individualistic, but a social religion. It feels its duty, not only to look after the spiritual salvation of man, but after his temporal welfare and development, so that he may lead a fuller and richer life even in this world. Hence schools, colleges, and universities, and works of mercy and charity of every kind and description. These are not baits or inducements for conversion, but are of the very essence of our faith. They are the radiation of a living faith. As Apostle James said, faith without works is dead. They have been the visible marks of the apostolate throughout these nineteen centuries, and they are to be found not only in mission lands, but in countries which have long been Christianised. This fact alone should give the lie to such allegations.

In this the Church is true to the inspiration of her Divine Master who spent his life in doing good (*transiit*

benefaciendo)—He who had compassion on the multitude, fed the hungry, consoled the afflicted, and who in the end gave his very life for man. Love and mercy are pre-eminently the hall-marks of Christianity. Just as Christ died for all men, not for Jews alone. His love and mercy extends through the Church to all men without distinction. For the Church, as for Christ, there is no East nor West, no Jew nor Gentile, no slave nor freeman. They are all bound in the bond of charity, which means brotherly love.

That is why all our institutions are, as far as our means go, open to all, whether they wish or do not wish to accept our faith. By the way, out of millions of our countrymen who have taken advantage of Christian educational and charitable institutions, how many, may we ask the honourable Niyogi Committee, how many have sought baptism? The percentage is fractional. If the sole object of the mission institutions were conversion, they would have long ago been closed as bad business. The game is not worth the candle. The results are certainly most disappointing, considering the enormous expenditure of labour and money, effort and sacrifice.

Yet this is not the primary object of Christian missionaries, *qua* missionaries. The primary object of a Christian mission is evangelisation—the bringing of Christ's life and message to all men. Therefore, when missionaries are asked, as some Indian politicians have done, to confine their activities to educational and welfare works and not to do evangelising work, they are asking for the impossible. A missionary is not primarily a welfare worker or a philanthropist. He is primarily a messenger of Christ. The other things—the works of mercy—follow, because such works are an irradiation of faith. But works cannot stand without the faith. Let there be no mistake about it.

Now this explains why missionaries utilise the opportunities or contacts they make through their institutions to preach Christ or to teach the Bible. But thereby they do not compel anyone into acceptance of their religion. They do not violate the God-given freedom of any man, however backward or primitive, to accept or reject. Neither do they hold a mart or try to strike a bargain. No Catholic missionary could ever say: Look here, I shall give you education; I shall heal your malady; I shall help you with a loan; I shall provide some work, if you will only promise to be a Catholic. Whoever makes such allegation, lies in his teeth. He is the child of Satan, the father of lies.

Equally he is a liar who alleges that anyone is discharged

from school or refused medical or other aid, merely because he refuses to accept the new faith. Discrimination there may be in some cases. It may be that sometimes the poorer converts are given free tuition while others are not. But this is not done as an inducement to adopt the new faith. This is done because the means of the given mission are limited, and the mission's primary responsibility is naturally to those in the fold. No fair-minded man will find this unreasonable.

CHAPTER XI

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

I may point out that, so far as Catholic schools and colleges are concerned, the charge of proselytisation cannot stand. I challenge the Niyogi Committee to prove their statement (p. 156) that "it is clear that the Roman Catholics use the primary schools in the villages for conversion". This is as clear as mud. Unlike the Protestant Missions, which from the first have thought it their duty to teach the Bible to all students in their institutions, whatever their creed might be, the Catholic policy has been to confine religious or catechetical instruction to Catholic students only, and not to enforce it on others. Of course, if any student of his own free will wishes to attend such instruction, he is not debarred. But such cases are very rare. *The reason for this policy is that Catholic Schools are put up not for the purposes of evangelisation, but to provide religious instruction and guidance to Catholic children.*

The Church holds that secular instruction devoid of any religious teaching is not only incomplete, but dangerous, the building of character being one of the necessary objects of real education. In order to safeguard the faith of her children, the Catholic Church makes every effort to maintain schools of her own where Catholic children may be adequately looked after, not merely in their secular studies, but in their faith and morals. But our schools do not wish to follow the policy of the dog in the manger. So far as places are available, after providing for the Catholic wards, they are open to others as well on equal terms. The overwhelming demand from non-Catholic parents to enter our schools and colleges is not only a tribute to the tone, quality, and efficiency of these institutions, but a vote of con-

fidence in the management. The countless thousands of such students who have passed out of our schools and colleges will surely bear witness to the fact that no attempt was ever made to tamper with their religious faith or to force religious instruction on them.

This being so, it passes one's understanding why a dead set has been made by the educational authorities in Madhya Pradesh against Catholic schools in the tribal area. Most of them are on flimsy pretexts refused recognition, even though similar institutions in neighbouring States managed by the same Religious Order are recognised and make a good show. Indeed, many schools which were already recognised by the previous regime (Rajas) have been disqualified after the integration. Finally, it is surprising that when vast tracts of the tribal area are without any educational facilities, the Government of Madhya Pradesh should have thought fit to start schools side by side with mission schools, and the petty local officials should go all out to induce children in the mission schools to migrate into the new schools, which offer every possible inducement, like free schooling, books, meals, etc., whereas they are charged a small fee, usually in kind, in Catholic schools.

Now all such charges are dismissed by the Niyogi Committee in an off-hand manner. "Considering that a complaint of this type has not been made from any other part of the State and that a very large number of institutions run by Christian missions has been granted recognition by the State Government, we do not see any reason why the same Government should follow a different policy in respect of Jashpur only", says the Report (p. 129).

This sounds plausible. But the argument cuts both ways. For it may equally well be asked: "Why should the Jashpur schools alone complain about bad treatment when other Catholic schools do not do so?" Evidently because the tribal area has been specially marked out by the Government for discriminatory and unfair treatment, for reasons which have nothing to do with education.

"The vehement opposition of the Roman Catholic Bishop to the Backward Area Welfare Scheme was explained by the blow given to the proselytising activities of the Roman Catholics through their schools by the Backward Area Welfare Scheme" (Niyogi Report, p. 16).

I do not know who is the author of this explanation. There would be no blow to the Catholic missions for the simple reason that Catholic schools are not meant for, nor engaged in,

so-called proselytising. This is a figment of the Committee's imagination or a conclusion drawn from false evidence. I say this categorically: In all the schools in this area, as in Catholic schools in the rest of India, Christian religion is taught to Catholic children only, and in tribal areas to these too outside the class hours. This has been part of a general policy throughout, and such policies in the case of the Catholic Church admit of no differentiation from place to place. The opposition to the Welfare Scheme on the part of the local Bishop was the direct result of the policy of the Welfare Scheme workers, who seemed to be bent on destroying the established Catholic schools rather than on extending the area of education. This can be proved up to the hilt.

The Committee also allege that in Catholic schools Hindu children are passed off as Christians by merely changing their names in the admission registers. A case in point is adduced on p. 108 of the Report:

"At Ambikapur, Hiralal Uraon produced his Primary Certificate in which his name was entered as Johan Minj although he was a Hindu."

This is what the Committee were told and piously believed. Had they cared to make further investigations, they would have learnt that the so-called Hiralal had been baptised in Assam, where he was born, under the name of Johan Bosco, and had on his return to the area, been enrolled in Class IV of the school as Johan Bosco Minj, Minj being the name of his clan. When he appeared for his Primary Certificate examination, his name was entered as Johan Minj. How this Johan evolved into Hiralal is a mystery, which only those who put him up as witness will be able to solve. The pity is that it is on such flimsy, if not blatantly false, evidence that the Committee build up the case against the Missions!

CHAPTER XII

MOTIVES OF CONVERSION

What reasons induce men to change their religion? God alone knows, and the parties who are directly concerned, namely the converts themselves. No outsider has the means to probe into a man's heart and conscience to find out the truth—not

even the members of the Niyogi Committee. No outsider has an entry into this intimate forum. He may indulge in surmises, which may or may not be true. Hence "the non-Christian plea that these so-called conversions are brought about by force, fraud, or temptations of monetary and other gain" (p. 122), on which the Committee have based their report, is and can be no more than a guess.

Indeed, for all their inquisition, the Committee did not discover a single case in which missionaries used force or fraud in winning converts. If they had found it, they would have handed such cases over to the criminal investigation department, for force and fraud fall under the penal code. As for monetary gain, there is the stark fact that the condition of tribal or scheduled caste converts is not markedly different from the rest of their communities.

The only reliable witnesses in such a matter are the converts themselves. Unfortunately Catholic adivasis refused to appear before the Committee to give evidence, as their leaders found out that the Committee were prejudiced and that no good would ensue from their co-operation. But several Christian witnesses did appear and gave evidence.

I shall give here a few instances, culled from Vol. 2, Part B, of the Niyogi Report:

1. Jiwanlal Bijinam (p. 73), teacher in Dhamtaw, says he was familiar with Hindu religion as well as the teachings of Kabir, his ancestral religion being Kabirpanth. The reason for conversion was that, as a student in the Menmonite Mission School, he was impressed by the doctrine of redemption, Jesus dying for the sins of humanity. No inducement was held out to him by the Mission. There was no other case of conversion. Non-Christian students did not attend the Bible class. His family were against his conversion and had tried to dissuade him. He was baptised only after attaining majority, though he wanted to become Christian from the age of 16.
2. Nanu Rajdan and Bartu Sukra, ex-inmates of leper asylum, Chapa (p. 103), had become Christians after entering the asylum, of their own accord, no force or promise being used.
"When we contracted the disease, members of our family turned us out. We were received in the asylum, given proper treatment and looked after by the foreign

missionaries and other Christians working there. I had purchased a Bible for one Rupee and when we read the contents and saw the life of the Christian missionaries, we were attracted to their religion and became converts voluntarily." They had left the asylum after being declared non-infective, but still remained Christians.

3. Tularam John of Lata (p. 105), regarded as a leader of the community. Reasons for conversion: (1) In school treated by the teacher cruelly as an animal; (2) Hindu teacher treated him contemptuously as a Chamar—Satnanis treated badly by Caste Hindus; so he enquired about other religions—about Islam, but he couldn't read the Koran in Urdu; about Kabir, but the sect didn't appeal to him. Got a copy of Hindi Bible in Takhatpur Market, which he studied for a year. The feature that influenced him was the doctrine of social equality. No foreign or Indian missionary had held any inducement to him.
4. Parsram Kolsaji, Wadhona (p. 192)—became Christian in 1950 (24 years of age). No missionary had promised him food, clothing or any other thing—"I became a Christian because my brother Keshavrao had become a Christian. I read the Bible and believed in the words of Jesus that he is the truth, way, and life."
5. Govind Kinkar of Wani (p. 193)—became convert at the age of 23. No inducement for conversion by way of food, clothing or girl in marriage. As a young man, he had felt keenly that he was an outcaste. His contacts with Christians showed they treated him as equal, and even in Churches there was no differentiation. "All I know is that Christians love me and that their God must be a God of love. In the Bible I found that God sent his Son out of love for humanity and that by his sacrifice there should be love between man and man. I then decided to only accept such a God as true God."
6. Soubaji Nagoji (Mahar) (p. 195)—no inducement offered. He had lost seven children and his last son was seriously ill, when Christians came on his invitation and prayed for the boy, who was cured after 4-5 days. "I believed that the God who had saved my son was the true God. I had now full faith in that God."
7. Sonaji Wakode of Darwa (p. 195)—was moved by a

"messenger of God" (Rev. Timothi) who preached that those who wanted their sins forgiven should come forward. Preachers preach about forgiveness of sin through Jesus and everlasting life. He knew of no case of conversion due to inducement of material comfort. No foreign missionary has ever tried to put pressure on anyone. He loved Arya Samajists, Hindus and other creeds, because Christ had asked Christians to love even their enemies.

8. Silas Danial Zingre of Shirpur (p. 197)—a Mahar. In his boyhood untouchability was strictly enforced and they were not allowed to enter temples or to draw water from village wells. Arya Samajists, Muslims, and Christians used to come and preach. Christian preachers said that if man wants salvation, he must come to Jesus Christ, that God loves all creatures, and that He sent his only begotten son to be sacrificed for the love of man. This impressed him, and as Christians said that only those who believe in Jesus and get baptised, will enjoy everlasting happiness, he became a convert. He continued in his previous occupation as weaver, and had got no material benefit from change of religion.
9. Manikrao Hanote, a Mahratta (p. 214)—suffering from leprosy. For 13 years as inmate of two leper homes he had listened to Christian preaching, but had not liked to change his religion. At one time when he was at the point of death, he thought of Jesus; declared his faith in him, saying that, as he had shed his blood to wash out human sin, he should help him in this crisis. After that he gradually recovered, and embraced Christianity.
10. Mangalbhair of Khudanpur (p. 215)—In 1923, aged 16, he happened to listen to a sermon by a Moulvi who had become Christian, when he described his state of mind at the time of his conversion, which coincided with his own. "I was feeling the load of sin, but when I heard him saying that Jesus Christ shed his blood and took away the sins of man, I believed in his message and felt immediate relief. Then I embraced Christianity and resolved to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ as long as I was alive."
11. S. P. Dongardive (p. 234)—became a Christian at the age of 15 because his father had become Christian and

- there was thereafter a great change in his life. The father used to read the Bible to him and he came to believe that Jesus alone could save him from sin. As a Harijan, he was treated as an outcaste, but now that he had become Christian, he enjoyed social equality.
12. Gangaprasad N. Tiwari of Munjeli (p. 279)—became Christian when 23 years old. No secular inducement offered; the only inducement was that he would be admitted into the Kingdom of God, attain peace of mind, become a son of God, and be delivered from sin. He had gone to Bombay and become a cine-story writer. As a Brahmin, he had read Bhagavad Gita. Then he went to a Moulvi to learn about Islam. Next he turned to the Bible and was impressed by St. John's Gospel. The great difference he had found between the Christian and the Hindu religion was that God himself goes in search of a sinner through Christ, whereas in Hinduism man has to seek God. He had gone to some missionaries for enlightenment, but they took no interest, being under the impression that he was out for monetary help. It is only after they had tested his sincerity that he was baptised. *"Among Hindus the vast majority, i.e. 99 per cent disapprove of a man embracing any religion out of conviction and they always try to disgrace him and put difficulties in his way."* He said further: "I am acquainted with many of the foreign missionaries in Madhya Pradesh, and I have lived with them, and I never found they had tried to influence the mind of Christians against their own State or to alienate them from the loyalty to their country."

As will be seen from these case-histories, no one confessed that any material inducement had been held by any missionary for a change of religion. Apart from social disabilities which outcastes were suffering, which predisposed them to accept a religion of human equality and fraternity, in almost every case it is the love and sacrifice of Christ, who had taken upon him the burden of human sin that had a decisive effect on the converts, whether high or low, educated or hardly literate. But the Niyogi Committee brushed all this evidence as untrustworthy, when it was the only relevant evidence, while eagerly drinking in every irresponsible charge made by non-Christians who were evidently primed and tutored to sing the same song.

Dr. Niyogi, an ex-Chief Justice, at any rate has had a wide experience of witnesses appearing in courts and telling under oath whatever they have been asked to tell. Truthfulness is not one of our shining virtues. But there were a few independent witnesses, Hindus, who tried to do justice to the much maligned missionaries. I shall refer to the evidence of two of them.

Iqbalshankar Shrivastav, pleader, Khandwa (p. 184-87)—had been a Naib-Tahsildar in Madhya Pradesh for 9 years, when he resigned owing to Gandhiji's call of satyagraha (1930). In 1918 he had left school when Gandhiji had called for educational boycott. As Naib-Tahsildar he had toured extensively in Khandwa and as a pleader he had met many Harijans, Hindu and Christian, but had heard of no foul or forcible conversion. He had also listened to preachings, Roman Catholic and Methodist, but had not come across a single instance when they had spoken disparagingly of other religions. In the last election he had stood on a Jan Sangh ticket and previously he had canvassed for an independent candidate, and he had found that the Missions had instructed Catholics to vote for whomever they liked. Christians had always co-operated with other communities for common causes, and from 1931 to 1954 there had been no agitation against Christians. It was Babulal Walter and Mrs. Prasad, helped by some bigoted persons that had started the rumpus in April 1954, because they had been removed from their jobs in the Mission. He handed over some pamphlets against Christians. In one case after investigation, he had found that the signatories had never signed it. In the other, which told about reconversion to Hinduism of a number of Catholics in Khandwa, he had found that none of them had changed their religion.

The other witness I shall quote is Laxman Jiwaji Morabkar, Brahmin, retired Forest Ranger (p. 196)—was stricken with leprosy, and after trying the Government Hospital ineffectively, had sought admission into the Mission Hospital in Baitalpur, from which after an operation he had come out completely recovered. He stated that, though there were 600 patients, mostly Hindus, no one had ever tried to induce any non-Christian to change his religion. Prayers were said for bringing about the recovery. The zeal of the foreign missionaries in the hospital is such that he could never believe they had any evil motive about India or Indians. In cross-examination he said that people were attracted to mission hospitals, not only on account of better equipment but better

service and treatment. The missionaries helped the poor people with clothing, etc. as all charitable people are expected to do. Though he had read the Bible and Christian literature, he still stuck to his religion.

CHAPTER XIII

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

To be quite frank, I do not mean to assert that the tribals and Harijans who seek conversion are always or even generally moved by spiritual motives. It is quite probable that most of them, in wishing to change their old religion whose votaries treated them as mud, are trying to improve their social, and possibly their economic, status. Well, they are free to do so, and their secular oppressors have no right to prevent them, unless they mean to use the secular arm, that of the State, to keep them under bondage to vested interests. When the Niyogi Committee raise their hands in pious horror because Catholic missionaries help them with small loans in their distress, one may wonder whether they are trying to perpetuate the hold of local *saukars* on these suppressed classes.

Whatever the motives of prospective converts may be, they do not affect the missionary, so long as he does not make material aid a precondition of conversion. There were a number of witnesses who gave evidence to that effect, but a really judicial mind would know what credit to give to such tales. The fact, however, remains that no Catholic missionary would dare to baptise the aspirants without trying to find out their sincerity and without satisfying himself that they have learnt the elements of faith. That is to say, that, whatever the originating impulse, it is a true conversion if at the time of the baptism the neo-convert has understood the meaning of what he is doing and accepting baptism because he truly believes in Christ and His message. It is all the easier for the tribals to accept Christianity because, as Fr. Hermanns points out in Part II, the tribal cosmology and many beliefs about creation and life after death have close affinity to Christian beliefs.

The Niyogi Committee have a queer notion of religious conversion. The Report has it (p. 122): "If conversion is an individual act, one would expect deep thought and study of the

particular religion one wanted to embrace. But what we found is groups of illiterate Adivasis with families and children getting their top-knots cut and being shown as Christians.

According to these learned men, only students of comparative religion or scholars in philosophy and theology would be entitled to change their religion. Religion is not metaphysics. A Hindu may be a sound Hindu without a deep knowledge of Vedanta. And so may a Catholic be an admirable Catholic without poring into Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. Is it so very difficult for an Adivasi to see that the new faith is superior to the congeries of beliefs and superstitions which governed his previous life? And talking about material considerations, can anyone deny that today there are many in India who have felt the attraction of Christ, but who will not change, not being prepared to face the ostracism and other social disabilities that would follow such a step?

May I remind the venerable members of the Committee that the gospel was from the first preached to the poor, that the first converts—apostles and disciples—were overwhelmingly from what we call the masses in Palestine, and that in the Roman empire its appeal was first felt by the slaves and other disinherited of fortune? *En passant*, may we ask the Hon. Niyogi whether the hundreds of thousands who joined him in making a plunge into Buddhism, are they all deeply versed in that creed?

Indeed, it has been a lesson of history that Christianity has won the humbler people more easily than the intellectuals—though intellectuals in their thousands have also fallen under its spell. The reason is that acceptance of the faith involves an act of humility and simplicity, whereas the learned are full of intellectual pride and sophistication. The wonderful life of Christ—the luminous teachings of Christ—are open to the illiterate and even dull intelligence. Christianity speaks to the heart before it grips the mind. If the Roman slaves and Palestine fishermen could grasp it, so may the Harijans and the Adivasis of India. Such contempt for the suppressed classes could only come from men of higher castes, who have always thought them as sub-human. Yet these sub-humans, under the influence of Christianity, have risen to be lawyers, doctors, and priests, bishops and members of Parliament.

What a funny idea that cutting the top-knot makes one a Christian! There were a number of witnesses that vouched for this imbecility, and the gullible Committee obviously believed it! Top-knots have, of course, nothing to do with conversion.

They are a traditional custom, which, being innocent in itself, no religion would interfere with. As a matter of fact, a very large number of Catholic adivasis continue to sport the top-knot, and remain as sound Catholics as the rest.

"Most of them," says the Report (p. 123), "do not know even the rudiments of the new religion. To cite a typical instance, Beni Madhao, who was the son of a Malguzar, was unable to say with what book the Bible begins and with what it ends." Evidently the learned Committee wanted Adivasis to be Biblical scholars! Could Dr. Niyogi off-hand tell us what is the first and the last hymn of the Rig Veda? If this is a typical instance, then the Committee have been looking out for mare's nests.

CHAPTER XIV

MASS CONVERSIONS

If, as Christians say, conversion is an individual act, argues the Report, what is the meaning of mass conversions? Yet such mass conversions, conversions of whole villages, have been reported. Can these be classified as genuine conversions?

It is true that such mass movements to the new faith have taken place among some of the tribes, notably Uraons, in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. I shall explain presently the reason of such mass movement. The point is that the movement may be a mass movement, but the baptism and conversion are individually distinct. A whole village may present itself for baptism. It does not follow that the missionary will straightaway take a bucket of water and baptise them *in situ*. Such phenomena one may see in Buddhist conversion or when the Arya Samaj or the Mahasabha goes in for mass *shuddi*. To them it is indifferent whether the neophyte knows anything of the new faith he embraces. What they are interested in is numbers, of which they can publicly boast. Religion doesn't come into the picture at all.

What the missionary does in such cases is: (1) satisfy himself that the movement is genuine, and (2) give them individual or small group instruction in catechism or Christian doctrine, including the common prayers, the Creed, and the commandments—also about the sacraments, including that of baptism

which they are going to receive. It is only after this process which may last a long time is completed, that they are baptised individually, one at a time. The final result, of course, has to a stranger the look of mass conversion.

The following table, which deals with the mass movement in Udaipur will make this clear:

<i>Date year ending</i>	<i>1 Total No. registered</i>	<i>2 Total No. accepted for instruction</i>	<i>3 No. of baptisms</i>
30-6-36	8,845	8,692	153
30-6-37	8,825	8,515	310
30-6-38	9,384	8,918	466
30-6-39	8,984	8,285	699
30-6-40	9,399	8,405	994
30-6-41	9,721	8,601	1,120

(Figures from the records of the Diocese of Ranchi.)

Column 1 shows the number who presented themselves as willing to be baptised.

Column 2 shows the number accepted for instruction after the preliminary sifting.

Column 3, the number actually baptised.

In presence of such striking figures, can anyone pretend that the Catholic missionaries go in for mass conversion?

The question, however, arises: Why is there such a mass movement? We may counter with a question of our own: Why did these myriads of Harijans join the late Dr. Ambedkar in embracing Buddhism? Evidently, because he was their trusted leader, and they had implicit belief in his understanding and wisdom. It was an act of faith, not in the Buddha, but in Dr. Ambedkar.

The same thing happens with the Adivasis. Every tribal village has its panch, the heads of the village, who decide matters of common interest, and when they arrive at a decision, they call upon their folk to agree to their elders' decision, because they have a faith in them. So the whole village moves.

The movement towards Christianity in the tribal areas of Jashpur, Surguja, and Udaipur, the areas which were subject to the Committee's investigation was a spontaneous movement from the people themselves. The missionaries had nothing to do with it.

These were Indian States, which did not allow of the entry of the missionaries, much less any mission activity. The tribes were cut off from any direct contacts with Catholic priests. Now these tribes were groaning under the oppression and exactions of the local rajas, the petty officials, the landlords, and the money-lenders. They bore it as best as they could so long as they saw no remedy. But they had come to learn from their fellow tribesmen in neighbouring Bihar that foreign missionaries had come to them and had stood as their protectors against such iniquities. It was the famous Belgian Jesuit Fr. Llievens that had come there and stood by them, and compelled recognition of their rights. As a result of this, Christianity appeared to them as their sole refuge and deliverance. The life of the saintly missionary and his companions, their devotion and disinterestedness, the discomforts they were prepared to undergo for their sake; above all, the extraordinary phenomenon of European Sahebs coming, not to command and domineer, but to serve and help, made a profound impression on these simple souls. If the tree can be judged from its fruits, wonderful must be the religion which inspired such lives.

So a mass movement began among the Uraons desiring baptism, and many of them, after due instruction, were received into the Church. Soon schools were founded and other welfare works were taken in hand, which raised the status and the morale of the Adivasis.

Now the Uraons in the Chattisgarh States became aware of the transformation effected in Bihar tracts by the Catholic mission, because they were not cut off from them. They attended the fairs and festivals and sometimes the Church services. They were, therefore, eager that the Fathers should come and help them as they had done in Bihar.

Ever since 1889 deputations from Jashpur had come to Ranchi (100 miles away) urging the missionaries to come to Jashpur, as they had decided to become Christians. The reply was negative, for the missionaries were not allowed entry and would not be able either to instruct them or to attend to religious services. But the Uraons would not accept this, and kept pressing on till in 1906 some Fathers entered Jashpur, braving the ban, and contacted the people. Large numbers were registered for instruction, and many had to cross over into Bihar to receive the instruction. There was no church, but the catechumens met under trees for common prayers.

There was no question of force, fraud, or inducement. The inducement came from the tribes. It was a disinterested

movement. They got no gifts nor loans. There were no promises even of protection, for the ban prevented the priests from functioning in the area. There was no question of schools or co-operatives. On the contrary, they were liable to undergo more suffering, once it was known they had invited the missionaries in. Yet the Uraons did not flinch. They were prepared to stand any test. Who dares call these heroic souls rice-Christians? Today they form a staunch Catholic community, of whom the Church is very proud. And India too should be very proud.

And what about mass conversion? Owing to the overwhelming difficulties of instructing them—they had to come to outside centres for the purpose—after nine years only one-third of those who had inscribed themselves had been baptised. Mass conversion with a vengeance! It appears these relevant facts were authoritatively brought to the attention of the Committee and surely deserved investigation. Yet there is no reference to them in the Report at all. They could not fit in with preconceived premises which were to lead to predestined conclusions.

CHAPTER XV

THE CASE OF UDAIPUR

The so-called mass conversions in Udaipur State in 1935 occupy a prominent place in the Niyogi Report (pp. 9, 12-14, 42-45, 114-116). The Committee make much of the "findings" of Col. Meek and Col. Murphy that "the alleged spontaneity of people in the Udaipur State to embrace Christianity was entirely false, and that the people had been actuated by one idea and one idea only, that being the receipt of the money from the Mission on loan" (pp. 115).

What is the truth?

The truth is that, like the Uraons of Jashpur, those of Udaipur had for years been deliberating through their panchayats whether they should become Christians, as they were in contact with their fellow-tribesmen in Jashpur and the district of Ranchi. Besides, some 10 Catholic families had settled in Udaipur for many years, and their neighbours had learnt something about the faith from them. As in Jashpur, no priest had

set foot in Udaipur, except one in 1927 just for one day, as he was asked to leave immediately. All these deliberations had been taking place not only without the intervention of the priests, but even without their knowledge. It was a ferment slowly permeating the whole mass.

The reasons were not far to seek. Like their people in Jashpur and in Ranchi, they were the victims of secular oppression and every kind of iniquity. They felt isolated and helpless. From Jashpur and Ranchi they had learnt the transformation that had set in through the help of the Catholic priests and their acceptance of the new faith. They no doubt realised that the new religion of hope and love was far superior to the religion of superstition and fear which held them in its grip. They at any rate learnt about the devoted service given to them by the foreign priests and the general progress made by the Uraons in these parts after their baptism.

But their difficulty was this that no priest was allowed to enter Udaipur, not even to serve the few Catholic families settled there.

Now in 1934 there was a failure of the crop and a good deal of distress in Udaipur, and when the new sowing season in 1935 was near, many of the people had no money even to buy the necessary seed. The State authorities, whose duty it was to relieve their distress, were indifferent. They then thought of appealing to the Catholic priests in Tapkara for relief, having no doubt heard about their charitable nature and their devotion to the underprivileged.

Among those who approached the Missionaries, there were many who genuinely wished to become Christians and offered to register themselves as willing to be baptised. There were no doubt others who had no such desire, but who thought they were likely to secure the loan if they pretended a desire to become Christians. There were quite a number who asked for help without registering themselves. In no case did the Missionaries make the acceptance of baptism a condition for the loan. On their part it was a matter of help in need. The money, by the way, was not given as gift, but as a loan repayable with interest.

The loans were of small sums, sufficient to buy seed. On an average they did not exceed Rupees five per head. They were given to all, whether they had inscribed themselves as would-be Christians or not. Repayment was expected from all, and, as a matter of fact, almost all repaid the money, and payment was condoned only in a few cases of special distress,

nor was discrimination made in such cases between catechumens and others.

All loans were stopped after February 1936 on receipt of the A.G.G.'s order served on the missionaries. Yet between March and June 1936 no less than 44 families came to Tapkara to be registered as would-be Christians without any hope of getting a loan, and as the map in p. 49 shows, many thousands went on registering themselves of their own accord from 1936 to 1941. There was now no question of loans or any other inducement.

On the contrary, because under Col. Meek's high-handed orders no priest nor catechist could set his foot in Udaipur, these would-be converts would meet on Sundays under a tree or in any other convenient spot to say some prayers. But this was not enough for them to secure entry into the new faith. Without adequate instruction no one could be baptised. So year after year during the months of March, April, and May—the only months when they were free—groups of 40 to 60 men, women, and children would undertake journey by foot to the Mission Centre of Kurdeg (30 to 75 miles away), trudging for 2, 3, or 4 days solely to receive instruction, and as many days to return to their homes! Are these rice-Christians? And, mind you, they could not expect the benefits from the Mission which were available in Jashpur or Ranchi, for no Mission could get a footing in Udaipur.

Yet the egregious Col. Meek (or shall we call him Col. Blimp?) had the audacity to call these folk mercenary converts, a calumny which the equally egregious Niyogi Committee were only too glad to endorse. The way the Committee play up Col. Meek and his inquiry is suggestive. Here is actually a gentleman, who, in spite of being Christian, has been forced to condemn the methods of proselytising adopted by Catholic Missionaries. What more evidence do we need? That's how the mind of the Committee worked. Yes, gentlemen. Whether you needed evidence or not, the impartial reader should like to be assured of two facts: (1) Whether Col. Meek was a Christian in any sense of the word, apart from having been baptised as a child, and (2) whether he had an animus against the Catholic missionaries. It appears that it was notorious that both Col. Meek and Col. Murphy used to run down anything Catholic in the Club of Ranchi.

Anyhow, the facts are as I have stated, deriving my knowledge from authoritative sources. It was up to the Niyogi Committee to investigate them impartially and objectively, and not

merely repeat what the eminent upholders of the British Raj had put down. The Bishop of Raigarh-Ambikapur brought all these facts to the attention of the Committee, who curiously enough, did not think fit to publish his memorandum in either Part of Vol. 2 of the Report!

The British—and Christian!—Political Department forbade any priests from entering Udaipur from 1936 to 1941, expelled all catechists from there, and brought back all Udaipur children who had been sent to Tapkara for studies, lest they be contaminated with Christianity! During June, July, and August 1936, Catholics in Udaipur were also subjected to a violent persecution, fines, beatings, threats of confiscation.

It was after a lengthy correspondence between the Bishop of Ranchi and the Political Department that in 1941 priests were allowed to attend a dangerously ill person after previous information to the police, to celebrate Mass at a village near the border four times a year after due permission, provided that no priest could stay in Udaipur for more than 48 hours. No catechists from outside were allowed into the State. In August 1946 the Udaipur Conversion Act by the Darbar was passed, whereby no person under 21 could change his religion, and anyone, wishing to do so, must make an application to the Magistrate who would investigate and decide. Preaching with a view to conversion was also banned. So much for our famous religious tolerance!

That, cut off from priests and catechists, for nearly 16 years and often submitted to great pressure a number of would-be Catholics relapsed into their ancestral religion, should not be surprising. What is surprising is that so many did actually persevere despite insurmountable obstacles. Their resolution is nothing short of heroic.

As a proof of the spirit of these Adivasi Christians, there is the story of a young man of Gholeng (Jashpur) who, to believe a witness before the Niyogi Committee, had been converted by allurements and against the wish of his parents. The young Christian, on learning of this, appeared the next day before the Committee, challenged anyone to prove this allegation in his presence. "I declare," he said, "that I have not been moved by any material advantage. I have always paid full fees in the school, before and after my conversion. My father who is not a Christian, has given his full consent. He takes the trouble to bring the rice required for my boarding fee." Then, turning to the people around, he cried scornfully, "See, brothers. These gentlemen (i.e. Committee) believe there

is somewhere here a market of religion. Have you ever seen such a market? Is religion a kind of goods to be bought and sold?" The incident, by the way, does not appear in the published evidence in the Report.

CHAPTER XVI

MONEY-LENDING

On p. 113 of the Report, we read: "Among the various devices employed for proselytisation one is *money-lending* carried on by the Roman Catholic Missions. In our exploratory tours there was everywhere the complaint in the districts of Surguja and Raigarh that the Roman Catholic Missionaries advanced loans on condition that the debtor agreed to chop off his top-knot (choti) and that those who did not accept the condition had to repay the loan with interest."

The members of the Niyogi Committee are presumably educated men, men who are expected to have some elementary knowledge of Christianity. If so, how did they believe the bazaar gossip purveyed by stupid and illiterate people that chopping off the top-knot makes one a Christian? Any man with a sense of humour would have laughed at this ludicrous charge. Not so the eminent Committee men. They solemnly record it, accept it as a fact, and pass judgment on it without further ado. And to believe that one of them was actually once the Chief Justice of Nagpur High Court!

If the Committee had cared to ascertain facts instead of rushing to conclusions, they would find that, apart from the specific case of Udaipur which has been already dealt with, no money has ever been lent, or given, or promised by Catholic Missions to prospective converts in Jashpur or Surguja, the only two other missions in the area. What the Committee have stated is demonstrably false.

The loans in Jashpur are given by Mutual Aid Societies, established by Catholics themselves. The capital is their own; neither the Mission nor any priest has invested a single pice in them.

The loans are given exclusively to members who are already Catholics. Neither the Mission nor any of the priests may take a loan or share in the profits. The loans are granted by the

Committee on the recommendation of the village panch, and no priest has a hand in it. The only help the Mission gives is to audit the accounts free of charge, to see that the funds are managed honestly.

Is it a crime for the Adivasis to establish such funds for mutual help, and learn the value of thrift and self-help? Yet the judicial-minded Committee have no qualms to declare that the Mission buys souls with pieces of silver!

In Surguja, where conversions are of recent date, no Mutual Aid Societies have yet been started. But, likewise, no loans are or have ever been given to prospective converts.

What has given rise to this slanderous charge is that in 1952 some crooks started a rumour in Sitapur Police area that money was going to be lent on a large scale. Those wanting loans had only to bring their *parchas* to certain centres and have their names entered with the amounts required.

Hundreds of people flocked to these places where certain writers examined the *parchas*, took down the names with the amounts required, and, of course, exacted 'likhai' fees: from two annas to a Rupee. All sorts of rumours were current: some said the money was being given by the former Maharaja, others by a generous lady from America, others by the Protestant Padres or by the Catholic Missions, while others thought it was sent by Subhas Chandra Bose!

This went on for some months, until Catholic missionaries, Rev. L. Van Roey and Rev. S. Tigga, reported the matter to the police requesting that this exploitation of popular gullibility be stopped. As a result of this, seven of the writers were severely taken to task by the police, and the fraudulent business came to an end.

But, lo and behold! The judicious Niyogi Committee gives credence to false witnesses who affirm that this incident was due to Catholic missionaries, and that the Mission indulges in loans as proselytising baits! And these are all, like Brutus, honourable men. And note that in this case, which was a pure fraud, no loan was actually given to any one.

CHAPTER XVII

ATTACKS ON HINDUISM

"The voluminous oral and documentary evidence before us shows that attacks on Hindu religion, its gods and deities, are an important and integral plank of Christian propaganda and are being indulged in a concerted manner deliberately in all parts of the State and by all sorts of pracharaks, and are occasionally justified by authoritative organisations as a mere explanation of one of the commandments," says the Niyogi Report p. 121), after retailing a number of allegations made by witnesses.

Also in Part IV, the sixth finding of the Committee runs thus:

"A vile attack against the religion of the majority community is being systematically and deliberately carried on as to create an apprehension of breach of public peace."

Now this is a serious allegation, which, if true, I shall be the first to condemn as offending against the law of Christian charity which teaches us to avoid offence to the religious sensitiveness of one's fellowmen, however misguided they may appear to be. *Prima facie*, we should doubt that vile attacks are publicly made on the religion of the majority. As a matter of elementary prudence, the missionary or his pracharak would avoid it, for it might cause a riot or breach of peace, in which his own life would be in danger. For let us not forget that the missionary goes alone and alone faces the crowd of another faith. He has no secular arm behind him. Indeed, the secular arm, i.e. the local police, is hostile to him and would only be too glad to put him behind the bars! Does it stand to reason, judicial-minded members of the Committee, that the missionary would unnecessarily raise a rumpus against him?

Then again, as a matter of common sense, are the missionaries so foolish as to think that the best way to win other people is to wantonly attack their ancestral beliefs? This is a psychological absurdity. The Committee may consider missionaries as knaves—this is their privilege,—but they know they are no fools.

The very fact that in spite of the alleged vile attacks, made in public places, there has been no violence or breach of peace, shows that the charge is slanderous. The Committee put this down to the credit of the tolerance of the Hindus, but tolerance

has limits. Might it not be that the so-called vile attacks are figments of the brain or made-up tales for the benefit of the credulous Committee? For it is notorious that certain Hindu individuals and organisations whose aim was to discredit Christian missions, set about providing evidence for the benefit of the Committee, and at least ex-Justice Niyogi should know how easy it is in this country to manufacture suitable evidence.

The main charge, so far as I can see, is that the Christian preacher runs down idolatry, saying that idols are mere stones or wood, and not true gods. Now in showing the superiority of Christianity, it may happen incidentally that idolatry is condemned. But this surely cannot be called a vile attack on Hindu religion. For that matter, Hindu reformist movements, including the proselytising Arya Samaj, also indulge in attacks on idolatry.

Almost all the cases cited in the Report concern various Protestant sects. Catholics are not involved, and we have it on the authorities of the Bishop of the area that no Catholic missionary or pracharak indulges in vilification of the Hindu religion.

The only reference to a Catholic publication is to *Dharmapadesh* (Part II) in p. 120: "In the *Dharmapadesh* other religions are referred to as false religions, propounding worship of Satan. Catholics are asked not to go to Government schools or to schools where false religion is taught, and that if Government were to pass a law compelling Catholic boys to attend Government schools it would be repugnant to Divine law. The protection of cows is also ridiculed on the ground that the Christian God has given full power to man over the animal creation as over the vegetable kingdom." There are also references against the Government on account of its secular character (pp. 56, 57, 67 & 72).

Now this is a tissue of misinterpretations. The book under reference, let me point out, is a book for instruction of Catholics; it is not used for proselytising purposes. Therefore, the citations have no relevance to the business in hand, viz. conversion of non-Christians.

The question of true and false religion has been dealt with before (pp. 18 & 19), and I need not repeat the argument here. As for worship of Satan, it is emphatically denied that it has any reference to Hinduism. The reference is to superstitions about *bhuts* and spirits, which had most deleterious effects on the tribals. It is meant as a warning to Catholic converts not to indulge in the old practices, which are sinful. There is no

question of vilification here, since the book is not meant for circulation among Adivasis who believe in such *bhuts*.

The Catholic attitude to education has also been explained, and a special chapter is dedicated to it. Suffice it to mention that the Constitution itself gives us the right to maintain our own institutions for our pupils, wherein their faith may be safeguarded. As for the ridiculing of the protection of the cow, there is no passage in the *Dharmapadesh* even remotely bearing on it. That God has given man power over animal creation, we hold to be true, but this does not mean that we are against protection to the cow. Were laws enacted to prohibit the slaying of cows, Catholics would be asked to obey them, as they do not affect any religious principle.

As for attacks on Government on account of its secular character, it is a complete misreading of the texts. Catholics hold that in the circumstances obtaining in India, it is wise and expedient to have a secular government of the type that the Constitution has formulated, and we only wish that our translators, including the Niyogi Committee, could really understand the meaning and implications of this secularism. In which case there would be no such inquiry as was conducted by the Committee, nor the recommendations made by the Committee which are subversive of religious liberty guaranteed by the Constitution.

So far as Catholic missions are concerned, this is the sum and substance of the charge, which by no stretch of imagination can be called "vile attacks on Hinduism". What would be more to the point is the vile attacks on Christianity made in scurrilous pamphlets by Hindu communalists, copies of which were, I believe, brought to the notice of the Committee. One remembers the recent riots in India because of a reference to Prophet Mahomet. It is a tribute to the peace-loving character of Christians that far more scurrilous references to Christ and Christianity are allowed to circulate without a breach of peace. This is all the greater reason for authorities to extend their protection to a small helpless minority.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EFFECTS OF CONVERSION

The Niyogi Report pays lip-service to the contribution the Christian Missions have made to the shaping of Indian life (p. 133). They were pioneers in education and medical relief. They raised the neglected classes long before Gandhiji came on the scene, made them conscious of self-respect and dignity, and made them worthy to fill the highest posts. They stimulated social and religious reforms in the Hindu Society. They raised the status of women by giving them education. The finest community centres and industrial schools in India are the work of the Missions. Finally, the oriental scholars of Europe and America made Indians conscious of their own treasures of literature and philosophy. All this is acknowledged, because it is no discovery of the Committee and is known to every educated Indian. Besides, such open acknowledgement gives the Committee a fine air of impartiality, which the rest of the Report so woefully belies.

The Report in its general tone, temper, and tendentiousness can well be compared to Katherine Mayo's *Mother India*, which raised such an uproar in India. Indeed, it is far worse, because it accepts and records every slander and calumny against the missionaries as so many facts. The Report picks anything that rightly or wrongly has been said against Christian conduct throughout the centuries, ranging so to say from China to Peru, to damn Christianity and Missions alike. It has been held by all Christians as a deliberate attempt to discredit both the Missions and the religion, and to take away the religious safeguards in the Constitution. That this last is true is clear from the drastic recommendations of the Committee.

The Report, however, after the brief reference to the good done by Missionaries, turns to the darker side, to the dangers inherent in conversion itself.

The fifth conclusion or finding of the Committee (Part IV, p. 135) runs: "As conversion muddles the convert's sense of unity and solidarity with his society, there is a danger of his loyalty to his country and State being undermined."

As the finding stands, conversion inevitably muddles the sense of unity and solidarity. Since this was written, Dr. Niyogi himself has taken the plunge into Buddhism. It would be an interesting revelation if he were to tell us if this particular effect

has been realised in him or in the hundreds of thousands who joined him in the greatest mass conversion movements seen in India, before which the Christian mass conversions pale into insignificance. Or is it that conversion to Christianity alone has such deleterious effect?

There is no doubt that one of the results of conversion, so far as the Hindu society is concerned, is the disruption of family and social ties, a kind of ostracism to which the Christian convert is relegated. Such consequences follow nowhere else. In China, for instance, the convert does not find himself an exile from his family or social milieu. He continues to live in the household and maintain the old relations unaltered. But the fault here does not lie with the convert. The fault lies with the structure of Hindu Society which does not allow of a member changing his religion without a change in his family and social status. Conversion does not fit in with the structure of the joint Hindu family, and the convert is *ipso facto* ejected from the family as an alien element. This is probably one of the reasons why Hindus object to conversion as much, not merely to proselytisation. This is probably a reason why there are few conversions from the higher castes. The sacrifice involved is far too great.

But it is not to this disastrous effect of conversion, disastrous that is to say to the convert, that the Niyogi Committee refers. The prospective danger is to the loyalty to country and State. In other words, the Christians of India are in the eyes of the Committee potentially disloyal. This is a slur on the community which it indignantly resents and repudiates.

What are the facts on which this presumption is based? There are none. There are only suspicions and gratuitous allegations.

The Report (pp. 124-26) mentions allegations concerning "the denationalising and subversive trend of missionary propaganda". What is the evidence?

In Jashpur some had complained that the preachers had said that Jawahar Raj had come and there was no happiness and that the Christian Raj would come. This was denied by the Christians present there. But the Committee find corroboration in a statement from Hoshangabad District that the expression 'Jai Hind' was calculated to hurt the missionaries who would wish it to be substituted by "Jai Yeshu".

What sort of logic is this? Statements made in Jashpur, how can they be proved by one in Hoshangabad who was never in Jashpur? Someone makes an allegation; the Christians deny

it. The Christian denial does not count. The allegation stands. What an impartial fact-finding Committee!

It is a slanderous lie that missionaries, whether Catholic or Protestant, object to "Jai Hind". Patriotism is and has always been considered by Christians a natural virtue to be assiduously cultivated, and missionaries as well as lay Christians often end their public meetings with a vociferous Jai Hind. Nor is there any incompatibility between Jai Hind and Jai Yeshu. The victory of Jesus is concerned and lies on the spiritual plane, and in no way detracts from one's love and loyalty to one's motherland on the temporal plane. Christ's sovereignty has no terrestrial basis—everyone knows it who has some understanding of Christianity,—and can surely not be made the ground of an attack on Christian loyalty. There was one on the Committee, supposed to be a Christian, who could have enlightened his colleagues, if they were really so benighted.

All the sentences culled from some paper or other which speak of the Empire of Christ, to which the Committee draw pointed attention, have no other significance. They are used not in India alone but in Europe and America and all over the world, but no nation feels imperilled thereby. India too need not unnecessarily fear the imperialism of Christ.

Another sign of denationalisation: "After a villager is converted to Christianity, it is easy to alienate his mind against his society as well as his country and State," (p. 126). What is the evidence? One Gunwant Tayade says "that Christian convert changes his style of dress and assumes the air of a foreigner". Dr. Picket also has noticed this feature and has recorded it in a book of his. What need was there for the Committee to rely on some witness or some quotation? They could use their own eyes in the course of their tour through the tribal area. Did they find the Christian tribals posing as foreigners or were they distinguishable from their fellow-tribals? Probably the only people with foreign dress on the occasion must have been some of the members of the Committee.

The overwhelming majority of Christians in India are indistinguishable from their neighbours either in dress or mode of living. There are no doubt many who have adopted the Western costumes and manner of living. But so have many Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis. Are they all denationalised? The adoption of such habits is part of Westernisation, not Christianisation. The two things are not synonymous.

This apart, do the Committee subscribe to the theory that clothes make the man? Is man a tailor's dummy? Patriotism

is a matter of the heart, not of vestments. There is no more patriotic race in the world than the Japanese, and yet they all sport Western costumes. This is so trite and trivial that one need hardly waste words over it.

CHAPTER XIX

JARKHAND

The real trouble, which is the origin of all that led to the appointment of the Niyogi Committee is the Jarkhand movement. We say it categorically: Had there been no Jarkhand movement; had there been no agitation against the integration of Chattisgarh States into Madhya Pradesh, there would have been no trouble in the tribal area, no complaints against missionaries, and no Niyogi Committee and its egregious Report. This is the head and fountain of the mischief.

The Jarkhand movement, as is well known, was started by Mr. Jaipal Singh, a respected member of Parliament, in Bihar. The agitation was for a separate State of Adivasis in Bihar and adjoining areas. One such area consisted of the Chattisgarh States of Jashpur, Surguja, and Udaipur. Here there was a tug-of-war between Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, Congressmen on both sides trying to grab the area for their respective States. In between were the Adivasi leaders who didn't want to adhere to either, but demanded a separate State (Jarkhand) for themselves. Failing that, they wanted all the tribes united under Bihar. Eventually, the Government of India settled the matter by assigning the States to Madhya Pradesh. Meantime, considerable bad blood was created, and even the Chief Minister, the late Pandit Shukla, was met with black flags and rude slogans when he toured the area. This rankled in the mind of the State Government.

Now the responsibility for the whole agitation was laid at the doors of the missionaries. Why? Because some of the leaders of the movement were Christians, and it was presumed that Christians were mere tools of the missionaries for certain ends of their own. It is this suspicion that has darkened the counsels of the Madhya Pradesh Government and led to the persecution, about which complaints went both to the local and the Central Government, to the counter-agitation by certain

Hindu organisations, and finally the setting up of the Niyogi Committee.

One who reads the Report would come to the conclusion that Jarkhand was a movement for an independent tribal State, like Pakistan (p. 3, 9 *passim*). This is false. The Adivasis did at no time want to cut themselves off from India. What they wanted is no more nor less than what Tamilians and Telugus, Kannadas and Maharashtrians had been agitating for and eventually secured by the latest State Reorganisation. If agitation for Jarkhand is disloyal, anti-patriotic, treasonable, then the same charge must lie at the door of practically every politician and public man in India. I make bold to say that, if the others had a case for linguistic States, the Adivasis had a much stronger case, not only on the basis of language, but of race, culture, and the oppressive treatment they had received for countless generations.

Christians no doubt took a leading part in the movement. They did so, not because they were Christians, but because they happen to be better educated and in a position to provide such leadership. But the movement was a general movement, with the backing of Adivasis, irrespective of creed, and with non-Christian leaders as well. It is disingenuous on the part of the Committee to make it appear a purely Christian movement.

Finally, there is no iota of evidence that the Catholic missionaries had anything to do with this purely political movement. The Bishop has stated categorically that no missionaries took part openly or secretly in it, nor did they use their influence over their people in this matter. The Report states (p. 15) that the Bishop had been approached by Bihar Congressmen and by supporters of the movement, but had refused to co-operate. "In this letter the Bishop stated, if we, Catholic priests, had chosen to urge them on in the direction of joining the Jarkhand movement, the situation in Jashpur and Udaipur would have been much worse than it is now, considering that very close to one-fourth of the population of Jashpur is Catholic."

On which the Report comments, "This is a significant admission of the control exercised by Roman Catholic priests in matters outside religion and of the existence of a state of political agitation in the newly merged States." The insinuation, worthy of a pettifogging lawyer, is that the missionaries must have had a hand, since they are in a position to influence the people. Now the priests do not deny they have influence: what they do deny stoutly, is that they used the influence in the Jarkhand

trouble. As for the existence of the agitation, surely the Committee needed no declaration of the Bishop to learn about it. It was common knowledge. The Committee have had to descend to such sorry shifts to build up their spurious case.

Any stupid invention goes down solemnly in the Report. Thus (p. 9) we read: "With the advent of political independence in India, the agitation for Adivasisthan was intensified with a view to forming a sort of corridor joining East Bengal with Hyderabad, which could be used as a pincer movement against India in the event of a war between India and Pakistan." If the Committee had elementary knowledge of Indian geography, they would see that the supposed Adivasisthan is cut off from East Bengal and Hyderabad by Union territory, and the pincer movements could only exist in the demented minds of the inventors.

The Report equally solemnly warns Christians against demands of Christianistan, of which the Christians heard for the first time in the Report. Christians are too intelligent to fall into such traps. I do not know what purpose is served by such inventions, unless the Committee wished to rouse the unthinking rabble against the most peaceful, law-abiding, and loyal community in India.

The Committee tries to give a political twist to purely religious representations. Thus a picture of the Madonna with Child smiling on the map of Chota Nagpur is interpreted as Christian rule over the land! The consecration of Ranchi diocese to Christ savours of separatism and Jarkhand! Elsewhere the Report points out with regret that few Christians took part in the independence movement. This charge comes with ill grace from the Committee whose chairman was a Knight Commander of the British Empire, an honour which is usually not conferred on political agitators. But the charge is false. Considering their numbers and the backwardness of a large section, the Christian participation was by no means insufficient. Are the Committee aware that Indian Christians formed a considerable part of Subhas Bose's Independence Army, and that a large number of navymen who staged the mutiny in Bombay during the War were Christians?

CHAPTER XX

INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY

The Niyogi Committee was appointed to look into certain allegations made against the missionaries and charges made by Christians against the officials of Government. But what they, the new Sherlock Holmes, discovered was a sinister conspiracy between "the Papacy representing the Catholic Church and the American Democracy, united in a frantic drive for gathering proselytes to Christianity to combat Communism: the former to extend its religious empire and the latter to obtain world leadership" (p. 60).

The whole of Chapter III of the Report is devoted to the unveiling of this conspiracy. One goes through the Chapter and all one discovers is a regular mare's nest. The Committee seem to be suffering from an obsession which needs the attentions of a psychiatrist.

What is the evidence? Item 1—From 1941 onwards the Protestant Churches in various Conferences dealing with the new world order pressed for a *new international organisation* (italics of the Report) and they were some of the creative influences which led to the United Nations. They are also said to be responsible for including in the Charter a Commission on Human Rights. Is there anything wrong in it? Is the Niyogi Committee against the U.N. or against protection of human rights?

Item 2—The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace emphasized the necessity of developing Christian unity to co-ordinate Christian efforts for world order (i.e. peace). The Report proceeds to quote, italicising certain words. "The *Christian forces* of the world, though still a minority, must on that very account quickly become a *well organised and militant minority*." (*World Christian Handbook*, p. 57.)

The impression which the Committee are trying to create is that of a crusade against non-Christian peoples or countries; when what the Commission is trying to do is to organise the spiritual forces of Christianity for the battle of peace and a just world order. Ah! the sweet ways of our impartial Committee!

Item 3—Protestant organisations published a declaration on *Religious liberty*, which would include both liberty of worship and the right to educate and persuade. The Report italicises

these words, probably because it thinks this a preposterous claim. In which case our Constitution too would be preposterous.

Item 4—"For all the ills of the world infested by the demon of Communism Christianity professes to offer the mantra of not Christ, the hope of the Church, but Christ, the hope of the world."—Anything wrong? It is our privilege to offer this mantra. It is your privilege to accept or reject it. What is conspiratorial about it? It has been the deep conviction of Christians that communism which is a kind of religion, cannot be combated with arms or money, but mainly with spiritual weapons.

Item 5—After the constitutional provision of religious freedom, Protestant Churches decided to send evangelistic teams to India for mass evangelism through the press, films, radio "*to realise the Church as the instrument in God's hand; to face the problem of Communism and Secularism; to raise a prophetic voice against social, economic and racial injustice* (p. 27, *The Missionary obligation of the Church*, Wilnigen). The only word here which might sound objectionable is *Secularism*, which has nothing to do with our secular government, but which means the state of mind which thinks religion has no place or importance in the society or the World.

Item 6—"American missionary personnel has increased by 500 since 1951. The invasion of the missionary teams was in the Surguja District which has been closed to the Missions before the integration in 1947 with Madhya Pradesh."

The juxtaposition of the two sentences would lead anyone to conclude that 500 Americans had invaded Surguja! The fact is that no American missionary is working in the area!

Item 7—"In August 1948 the Assembly of World Council of Churches met at Amsterdam at which *Mr. John Foster Dulles* read a paper on Christian responsibility in our divided world. *Rev. J. Lakra* of the Evangelical Mission of Ranchi also attended the meeting. In the report of that meeting the decision was summed up in one sentence: "*God has given to His people in Jesus Christ a unity which is His creation and not our achievement.*"

I quote this, italics and all. But I fail to see its relevance, except that the Committee probably wish to insinuate that Mr. Dulles and Rev. Lakra entered into a conspiracy to conquer India for American imperialism. Indeed, this casual meeting of the two is referred to several times in the Report. The whole thing is absurd, *inter alia*, because at this time Mr. Dulles was not Secretary of State and had no official position.

Item 8—In the Bangkok Conference, 1949, the social task of the Church was stated to be to claim *the whole world for Him who is King and lord of all*.

The Committee surely are not so unintelligent as not to see that this and similar phrases in Christian literature have no temporal significance, and that it is very unfair as well as absurd to give them a political, imperialist twist.

Item 9—"A Conference in Lucknow, 1952, declared that Christians must recognize that the changes in the structure of society can be effected through *political action*, and that, therefore, they must accept the necessity of political action as a means of promoting social justice."

This has nothing to do with conversion, nor with starting a Christian political party. It only encourages Christians to use the ballot for promoting what we may call the socialistic pattern of life, instead of combating social evils merely through social action.

Item 10—The American Churches, recognising that in the mission field the indigenous Churches are touched by the new nationalisms independent in temper and yet not self-supporting, expressed the opinion that these Churches should be *rooted in the soil and yet supra-national in their witness and obedience*.

This means that national Churches must be encouraged to take root in the country, to become national-minded, yet remain in fellowship with their Churches elsewhere, as Christianity is a worldwide or ecumenical religion.

Item 11—"It is the duty of the Universal Church to execute the King's Commission for exterminating these religions" (viz. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism which are said to be challenging Christianity). I don't know what Universal Church is referred to here. If it is a reference to Catholic Church, it is a slanderous lie that it wishes to exterminate any religion. The same goes for Protestant Churches. The use of such language in an official document can only lead to the extermination of Christians in India. Is that what the Committee is aiming at?

Item 12—Alexander McLeish said at a Conference that "Indian Christian leaders have seen the vision of *evangelising India* and have issued a call to evangelise systematically in the next 10 years the 6,00,000 villages of India".

This is the opinion of a man to be taken for what it is worth. Still the word he used is *evangelising*, not *converting*. Evangelising means bringing the knowledge of Christ and the

Gospel to all the villages of India. Anything wrong about it? Anything conspiratorial?

Item 13—The Niyogi Committee are bothered about dual allegiance to God and to the State. But this is a problem which is not exclusive to the Christians. Has the Committee heard about Gandhiji's satyagraha?

Item 14—There is a cold war. The United States has no Asian territory. So she has established bases on the Pacific fringe of Asia and entered into military pacts. "The drive for proselytisation in India is an attempt to acquire an additional base which of course would be psychological. People converted to Christianity would be mostly from the outcastes or the aboriginals who can be primed with hatred against their countrymen, if for no other reason than the latter are 'idolators' and that the former belong to the Kingdom of God."

Irresponsibility could go no further. Here a Committee appointed by a Congress Government thinks fit to make a very serious charge against a friendly foreign nation on mere surmise and speculation without an iota of evidence. This is all very well for yellow journalism or for a Communist rag. But a Committee headed by an ex-Chief Justice! And where is the commonsense of it? To imagine that a conversion of a few thousands or even hundreds of thousands of aboriginals in the course of a number of years is going to decide the fate of the cold wars! This is ludicrous. Besides, it involves gratuitous and slanderous charges that the missionaries are tools of American Government and that the converts would prove traitors to their country.

Item 15—Conclusions: (1) that the aim in proselytisation is to resist the progress of national unity in the colonial countries—for which no evidence is adduced and which involves a slanderous charge that Christians are a stumbling block to national unity;

(2) that India desires "peaceful co-existence" but the World Council of Churches believes in "peaceful competition with a sincere commitment to growing co-operation", whatever that may mean. But a difference in opinion is surely no treason;

(3) to create a Christian party in India on the lines of the Muslim League ultimately to make out a claim for a separate State or at least to create 'Militant minority'.

This is a figment of excited imagination. What Christian leader in India has tried to create a Christian party or ask for a separate State? With such infamous charges does this Committee damn the Christian community in India. Now all the

above references, irrelevant as they are, were to various Protestant Churches and Organisations. The Catholic Church is not in any way involved.

Yet the final conclusion (p. 60) is of a conspiracy between the Catholic Church and the United States for world leadership! There is no rhyme nor reason here. It is pure Bedlam. One word more. The Committee are much troubled about the foreign money sent into India for the missions. They believe this comes from Governments and is meant to be used for subversion or for cold war purposes. Nothing could be further from the truth. Not a shilling nor a dollar for the Missions comes from any State or Government. Every penny is the gift of European and American Christians, private individuals, who are not interested in politics or imperialism, but only in evangelisation. The Committee could easily have found it out if they cared to.

The fact is that the United States in general and Mr. Dulles in particular seem to be an obsession with the Committee or, more probably, with Dr. Niyogi, the master-mind behind it. They would have consulted their reputation better if they had not launched into this wild goose errand. Don Quixotes tilting at windmills can only cut a ludicrous figure.

CHAPTER XXI

FALSE CHARGES

“Indian Christians are loud in their professions of loyalty to Independent (Capital I) India. Specially so are Roman Catholics. Suspicion, however exists. This is mainly because of the Indian Christian subservience to foreign influence and because of the Western interest in saving India from Communism. The Roman Catholics support the Congress Government mainly because they are anti-communist. There seems to be an unholy alliance between Roman Catholics and American money to save India from Communism. The West must realise that this is none of their business, and that Independent India needs no foreign help in solving its economic and social problems,” says the Report (p. 158) pontifically.

By the way they write, one would fancy that the Committee are the Government of India. They talk as if they were the

lords and masters of Independent (capital I, if you please) India. According to these mentors India needs no foreign help to solve its economic and social problems. Yet deputation after deputation from Government of India goes to Western countries, America above all, to seek such aid, while private American agencies like the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations are tackling the health and village problems of India. The arrogance of the Committee is matchless.

I am not concerned with this. What I am concerned with is the charge of disloyalty levelled against Christians in general and Roman Catholics in particular. It is only a suspicion, but it is treated as a fact, on which the Committee think fit to sermonise the Christians. But where and when have Christians and specially Roman Catholics been found disloyal? I would challenge the Committee to adduce evidence. How does the Committee know that the Roman Catholics support the Government because they are anti-communist? Did they carry out a Gallup poll to find out the truth? And is the Congress Government alone anti-communist? The Praja-Socialists are even more so. Indeed, every party, excluding the Communist itself. But the base insinuation must be put in that Christians are not interested in the welfare or progress of the country or the efficiency of administration, which touches their daily life at so many points. They are only interested in communism, and this not because of any ideological reasons of their own, but under missionary inspiration!

Long before America discovered the danger of Communism and started combating it, the Catholic Church had been up against it. But let no one forget that the aggression came not from the Church but from Russian Communism, which tried to exterminate every religion which it could not tie to its chariot wheels. Catholicism, because of its intrinsic strength and organisation, came in for special attention. Wherever communism has spread or has been enforced, there has followed invariably a religious persecution. Does any rational being expect Catholics to welcome their executioners with open arms? The Church is in the position of that *mechant animal* of Boileau: the naughty animal which dares to defend itself when attacked. Is the Niyogi Committee interested in the spread of Communism? One would almost think it is. In combatting communism Catholics believe they are doing a national service. Unlike the Committee, they are on the side of angels.

On p. 3 of the Report we read: "Reference was also made to the practice of Roman Catholic priests or preachers . . .

kidnapping of minor children and abduction of women . . . as a means of propagating the Christian faith." The Report has no evidence to prove this abominable charge. Yet the charge itself is given prominence, as if the abduction and kidnapping of women and children were a favourite occupation of Catholic missionaries. If in the course of their perambulations and inquiries the Committee found no evidence of this libel, why did they put it in? Is it on the principle that one has only to throw enough mud and some is bound to stick?

It is not so simple as that. There is a story behind it. On June 8, 1954, when the Committee were at Ginabagar, one Ram Niora Chaube, a brahmin of Kutitoli, burst upon the Committee with the startling revelation: "Hindu girl has been abducted and kept, we know not where, by the Padre of Jokahla Catholic Ashram in order to give her in marriage to a Catholic boy." The Committee took note of it, and the local police investigated the charge. The police tried their best to involve the missionaries in the case, and eventually in the court it was found that the girl was a major, that, according to her own confession, she was a Christian, that she had not been abducted by anyone, and that the missionary had nothing to do with the case, in which a vain attempt had been made to intimidate the girl into giving false evidence, implicating the priest.

Now, while the case was still *sub judice*, Dr. Niyogi thought fit to issue from Panchmari a press note published in *Hitavada* of May 25, 1955, stating that when the final report appeared, startling facts would be revealed, e.g. "the case of a Hindu girl abducted and kept by force by a Padre with a view to give her in marriage to a Christian boy". Unfortunately for him, the case misfired, and Dr. Niyogi, to avoid a libellous suit, kept a discreet silence in the Report. But all the same he kept the accusation in it, nor did he say in any place that the charge that missionaries indulged in abduction and kidnappings was baseless.

On p. 18 of the Report and more extensively on p. 21, detailed reference is made to the case of Rev. Dr. J. C. Christy, who is said to have been engaged in the anti-social crime of smuggling rice and causing injury to a public servant. The Report rightly says that he was convicted in the Court. This is a regular routine. All sorts of charges are brought against the local missionaries and they are invariably convicted, but when an appeal is made to the higher court, equally invariably they are acquitted. And so was Dr. Christy when he appealed against his unjust conviction. But the honest Committee, while

detailing the charge and conviction, forgot to mention the subsequent reversal of the sentence, even though this happened before the publication of the Report. So Dr. Christy remains in the pillory of the Report a convicted criminal!

A charge is printed (p. 19) that Rev. Patras Kerketta had addressed a meeting in a village, running down the Congress Raj and inciting people to pay no Malguzari dues to Government, to cut the Government forest, to assault officers who tried to check them and to beat those who would not join in these lawless actions. The S.D.O. made due investigations. Rev. Patras challenged the accusers to bring forth any evidence. None was forthcoming and so the missionary was left in peace. But not by the Committee, which must needs fish out these false charges so that the reader may learn what sort of villains these missionaries are.

There are several charges (pp. 19 & 20) that missionaries are trying to overawe local petty officials by making false accusations. What really happens is that people who are unjustly harassed by petty officials come to the missionaries for help and protection because there is no one else to turn to. The priests feel bound to help them against oppression, and write to higher authorities for investigation. Such investigations are often pure farce. Some police officer comes, listens to the tale of the official concerned and reports that the charge is baseless and the official blameless. If this, according to Niyogi mentality, is overawing, then the missionaries gladly plead guilty to the charge and obstinately will continue to overawe them. For there are things which cry out to heavens for vengeance, and one is the oppression of the helpless by those in power.

Finally there is the specific finding and recommendation of the report "that the Roman Catholic Church engages itself in the recruitment of labour and uses it as a means of proselytisation. Religious bodies should, we recommend, be prohibited from engaging in such occupations" (p. 157).

We will pass over the identification of the Catholic Church with any individual missionary, as the education of members of the Committee leaves much to be desired.

It is a fact that Catholic missionaries in Bihar, and to some extent in Madhya Pradesh, have taken an interest in the recruitment of labour for tea-gardens, but it is not a fact, but a perverse conclusion of the Committee, that they are doing it with proselytising motives. Let us get at the facts.

Owing to the poverty of the soil in the tribal areas of Chota Nagpur and in Raigarh and Surguja (M.P.), there was a

regular exodus of the people to tea-gardens and to industrial centres for earning a livelihood. Now anyone acquainted with this labour recruitment problem knows of the abuses connected with it. The priests found that conditions in many tea-gardens were unsatisfactory and that recruiting sardars were often not too scrupulous, with the result that married women and unmarried girls were lured away and families were disrupted. As many of the recruits were Catholics, the missionaries felt it their moral duty to protect the people from such abuses. They were specially anxious to prevent the enticing away of minors. Their main object was to advise and guide the tribals to those plantations where conditions were good both from the economic and moral point of view. Strictly speaking, they were not recruiting agents. They were guides and advisers.

Later on, the Government, wanting a responsible and disinterested body to recruit labour for Andaman Islands, asked the missionaries to undertake this charge. Knowing that the conditions of work were favourable, they took up the responsibility, and so the local recruits were registered by the parish priests, who sent them to Calcutta via Ranchi, where they were handled by the Government agency.

This was an act of charity and helpfulness to the poor tribals. Most of them were already Catholics, and no question of proselytising could arise. Non-Catholics too came to be registered, and they were duly sent on to their destination, but no attempt was ever made to use this as a proselytising agency, still less was conversion made a condition for recruitment. Any such allegations are pure, undiluted lies.

The unhappy thing is that vested interests suffer when a responsible body takes up the cause of the exploited, and when they happen to be missionaries, there is the ready weapon of proselytisation to be used to serve their nefarious purposes. It was up to the Committee to make proper inquiries before arriving at a finding based on mere allegations. But no such inquiries were made, and the so-called findings are not worth the paper they are written upon. As for this and other recommendations of the Committee, in final analysis they amount to this that the oppressed and down-trodden Adivasis may be deprived of the only help and protection they have received during centuries, and that they be handed back to the tender mercies of the local *Tchinowniks*, landlords, and *sowcars*. And all this under the cover of the bugbear of conversion.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONSTITUTION AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The Indian leaders who shaped the Constitution, guaranteed full religious liberty, *not only to Indian citizens, but to all persons* (Art. 25 & 26), by putting them not among directive principles, which are not amenable to the jurisdiction of the Courts, but among fundamental rights, which are protected by an independent judicature.

V. V. Chitaley in his *Commentaries on the Constitution of India* states (p. 135) that the purpose of including the religious and other rights among the fundamental rights is threefold: (1) that they may be acknowledged by all and receive the protection of the judicial power; (2) that they may guarantee the rights of the minorities against any pressure from the majority; (3) as a safeguard against the possible incursions of the Legislature and the Executive.

Regarding the first point Chitaley quotes with approval Madison's observation: "If they (fundamental rights) are incorporated in the Constitution, independent tribunals of justice will consider themselves in a peculiar manner the guardians of those rights."

As regards the second point, it is clear, says Chitaley, that in India where there is such a vast majority in proportion to the small minorities, the latter need special protection from a Constitution particularly in the question of freedom of conscience and religion. Constitutions are checks upon the hasty action of the majority. They are the self-imposed restraints of a whole people upon a majority of them to secure sober action and respect for the rights of the minority.

Lastly, writes the author, experience teaches us that the Executive and the Legislature may encroach too much upon the freedom of the individuals unless there is a check, and this is the function of the Constitution.

Art. 25 of the Constitution states: (1) Subject to public order, morality, and health, and the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

(2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law, regulating or restricting any economic, financial,

political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice. Art. 26: Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right:

- (a) to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes,
- (b) to manage its own affairs in matters of religion,
- (c) to run and acquire movable and immovable property,
- (d) to administer such property in accordance with law.

Now these rights were inserted after deep consideration and long discussion. They are the considered opinion of our Founding Fathers. Above all, the right of propagation of religion did not slip in through a fit of absent-mindedness, but after considerable discussion and controversy. Though these rights are common to all Indians and are not the exclusive property of any religion, it is a fact that Indian Christian representatives in the Constituent Assembly laid special emphasis on it, partly because there is in the majority community a special dislike to change of religion as such, and partly because as Mr. K. M. Munshi said in the course of the debate, the word "propagate" is a fundamental part of Christian tenets. "Even if the word were not there," said Mr. Munshi quite rightly, "under the freedom of speech which the Constitution guarantees, it will be open to any religious community to persuade other people to join their faith."

The Constitution gives the rights to all faiths impartially, and we know that the right is exercised by Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Arya Samajists, and Mahasabhites. The right is a human right, not a civic right, and is therefore to be enjoyed by all in India, including foreigners. To recommend, as the Committee does, that foreign missionaries whose primary object is proselytisation, should be asked to withdraw (p. 163) goes against Art. 25 of the Constitution. Besides, it is not the foreign missionary alone whose primary object is evangelisation (to use the correct word). The Indian missionary also is in the same category. In this matter, you cannot discriminate between the native and the foreign.

The only qualifications the Constitution imposes on this freedom is that of public order, morality and health. The Niyogi Committee, if they were to confine themselves to what is right and relevant in their inquiry, could only try to find if the methods of Christian missionaries in their activities offended any of these three heads.

So far as health goes, there has never been a question that any Christian practice is detrimental to health. Nor does the question of morality arise. Christianity inculcates the highest kind of ethics. There remains only the problem of public order. Christians have been practising their religion for ages in India, including public ceremonies, like processions, bhajans, and open air worship and preachings. But there is nothing on record that they were a menace to public order. Breaches of peace have been few, and in such cases the Christians usually are victims, not aggressors. I make bold to say that the Christian community is the most peaceful and law-abiding in India, and that goes, even in a higher degree, for missionaries.

The Niyogi Committee did not find, for all their inquisitorial methods, any evidence of mission activities leading to breaches of peace. They only opined that provocative language about Hindu gods alleged to be used by Christian pracharaks, might lead to such breaches. In the whole of Madhya Pradesh, tribal areas not excluded, all the communities had been living peacefully together all these years, and it is only lately that bad blood has been created through the intimidatory tactics used against Christians by certain fanatical organisations. If there is now a problem of law and order, it is these that have given rise to it. It is up to the authorities to take note and put it down. Let it not be said that in Madhya Pradesh it is the lamb that is the aggressor, not the wolf.

Force and fraud are criminal acts, which fall within the jurisdiction of the law of the land. Though the words, force and fraud, often appear in the Report—a kind of mantra, I suppose—there is nothing on record that either has been used by Christian Missions. No Christian convert has come forward to testify that he has been baptised through intimidation or has been cheated into the Christian fold. If the allegation is that many have become Christians, not through conviction, but for material reasons, then it is not the missionary who has deceived them. It is they who have deceived him. They are the fraud, not he. But here again none of the converts witnesses against the missionaries. It is outsiders who presume to know the hearts and the minds of the converts, I don't know by what kind of X-ray apparatus.

There remains only the material inducement. Let us grant for argument's sake that the illiterate aborigines and other backward people—to quote the Government resolution—change their religion, because they hope to improve their social and economic status. That is the whole gravamen of the charge,

on which the Committee has spent their energy and skill. What then? Is there anything in the Constitution or public law of the land that prohibits anyone from improving his status, provided the means used are not illegal or anti-social?

If a man in this nation has as much right to change his religion as he has of changing his occupation, who are the Niyogi Committee or the Madhya Pradesh Government to deny him this right? What right have they even to enquire into the reasons which have led him to adopt the new faith? Are they trying to establish a new Inquisition in India, they who have such harsh things to say about the old Inquisition, now happily dead and gone?

Let us grant again, for argument's sake, that missionaries hold out baits or material allurements to convert people. Both the missionaries and the converts deny this categorically, but let that pass. What then? The missionaries offer baits, but they do not coerce anybody to accept them. The people are free to accept or reject, as they are free to accept or reject the word of Christ. Such a thing may be morally wrong. But the State is not the keeper of men's conscience. If a missionary is free to propagate, as he is free to do so by our liberal Constitution, and if the means he adopts are not illegal, where does the State come in? The only reason alleged by the Government in the resolution appointing the Committee is that missionaries "thereby offend the feelings of non-Christians". There are many things—manners and habits and even ways of worship—of non-Christians which offend us. Is that a reason why we should call upon the State to abolish them straightaway? In a country which boasts of many communities, religions, and ways of living, peaceful co-existence involves tolerance and give-and-take. It would be sheer hypocrisy for India to preach such co-existence to foreign nations when she does not practise it at home.

I submit that the whole Report and the so-called evidence, which consists of nothing but unproven allegations, is really a mass of irrelevance. I do not refer here to the so-called conspiracy of American Government and the Christian missionaries, the Vatican at the head, to fasten a new imperialism on India. Such an idea could only have risen in deranged minds, and no sane man in India will entertain it for a moment. The extraordinary thing, for which I should believe there is no precedent in any Committee of Inquiry, is that such wild allegations on such flimsy evidence against foreign States, which are friendly to India, should appear in a Report by an official Committee

appointed by a State Government. The equally extraordinary and unprecedented thing is that the said Government should have allowed these allegations to be broadcast to the public, giving them so to say official countenance. This is a serious matter.

If it is believed that material needs lead the suppressed classes to change their religion, the remedy does not lie in a ban on conversion. The remedy is for the State to provide schools, hospitals, lepers' homes, and other beneficent institutions, so that the missionary works will not act as baits. We are not interested in so-called rice-Christians. Let the State and the Central Governments go all out to uplift these suppressed classes. Christians, far from objecting, will applaud and, to the best of their power, co-operate. But the aim should not be anti-missionary as some State Welfare Organisations seem to think, but purely humanitarian. The field is too vast for unnecessary competition. This is the constructive way to solve the problem, not missionary-baiting. Yet this is sure that even when the State out of its abundance has provided institutions to meet every need of the people, still these will turn by preference to missionary institutions, educational or charitable, for only there will they find the kind of devoted and disinterested service which is the prerogative of men moved by a spirit of love. There is all the difference in the world between mercenaries and apostles.

I shall not deal with the recommendations of the Committee, which strike at the root of not only religious liberty, but all liberty. I have no fear that the Government of India will act on these recommendations, which are a betrayal not only of the assurances given to Christian representatives in the Constituent Assembly, but of the noble ideals which inspired the founders of the Constitution.

I am sure that Dr. Niyogi himself who has lately seen new light and has adopted the four-fold path to Nirvana will, in the more dispassionate and recollected state of mind, realise that he has done grievous wrong to a body of men and women, whose dedicated life may well be set as a pattern for all.

In the course of this rejoinder I have given vent to legitimate indignation in presence of distortion and misrepresentation, slander and calumny, and the countless charges based on flimsy or no evidence, with which the Report is strewn. I offer no apology for calling a spade a spade. Indeed, I am astonished at my moderation. But the main purpose of this book is not to rebut the allegations or charges levelled against Christianity, the missionaries, or the Indian Christian community. The main

purpose is to present the Catholic doctrine on all issues raised by the Report in a clear and authoritative manner, so that the fog created by the Report in the minds of the people may be dispelled and light shine clear through the mist. I for one thank the Niyogi Committee that they have unwittingly given us, true sons of the Catholic Church and of Mother India, this opportunity of showing to our earthly mother the true face of our heavenly mother, so that our beloved country may rest assured that it has nothing to fear from either the Church or the Catholics of India.

A COURSE OF READING

Those who are interested to know more about Christ and the Catholic Church, may read:

The New Testament—translated by R. A. Knox.

Le Joly—*Jesus Christ, the Life* (Little Flower Book Service, Calcutta).

Daniel Rops—*Jesus in His Time* (Eyre & Spottiswoode).

G. Papini—*The Story of Christ* (Hodder & Stoughton).

Karl Adam—*The Son of God* (Sheed & Ward).

G. Ricciotti—*Life of Christ* (Mercier Press).

Karl Adam—*The Spirit of Catholicism* (Unicorn Books).

R. A. Knox—*The Belief of Catholics* (Unicorn Books).

G. Dandoy—*What is Catholicism?* (Light of the East Series No. 6).

J. Danielson—*Salvation of the Nations* (Sheed & Ward).

J. Danielson—*Advent* (Sheed & Ward).

Blaise Pascal—*Pensees* (Routledge & Kegan Paul).

J. Maritain—*The Things that are not Caesar's* (Unicorn Books).

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or refer to:

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They may also apply for information to:

I. H. S.

De Nobili College,

Poona 6.

APPENDIX I

THE FIRST PLENARY COUNCIL OF INDIA, 1950

ACTS AND DECREES ON CONVERSION AND
CONNECTED MATTERS

The First Plenary Council of the Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of India, the majority of whom are Indian nationals, met in Bangalore in January 1950, and after protracted deliberations drew up and promulgated 400 statements and decrees covering all vital questions particular to the Church in India. They express authoritatively the mind of the Church on faith, morals and discipline, and provide directives binding on Catholics, priests and laymen alike. We quote here some of these statements and directives bearing on the subject-matter of this book and invite the special attention of non-Christian readers to them, above all to those portions which have been italicised by us. They are by themselves the most authoritative and categorical refutation of the allegations made in the Niyogi Report.

CONCERNING CONVERSION TO THE TRUE FAITH
REVELATION

17.1—Christian Revelation which teaches us God's sublime mysteries and man's supernatural end, indeed surpasses and exceeds human reason. However, since God is the author of both revelation and reason, there can be no disagreement between faith and reason; for God cannot contradict himself.

2—Nevertheless in order that our submission to the faith be in agreement with reason, God wanted to add to the internal aids of the Holy Spirit, external arguments of His revelation, viz. divine works, especially miracles and prophecies which while clearly showing God's omnipotence and infinite knowledge, are most sure signs of God's revelation and are adapted to the intelligence of all.

18. God confirmed the mission of Jesus Christ and Christian revelation during the earthly life of our Saviour and of the Apostles; and also throughout the history of the Church and in our own times those same miraculous signs are manifest "which are also so abundantly and so wonderfully arranged by God to make the credibility of the Christian Faith evident. Even the Church by herself—on account of Her marvellous propagation, exceptional sanctity and inexhaustible abundance of all goods—on account of her catholic unity and invincible stability, is a great and perpetual motive of credibility and indisputable witness of her divine legislation".

19.1—Thus the true Church of Christ confirmed and sus-

tained by God in her life and works stands "like an uplifted standard among the nations even in our days". And she invites to herself all, both learned and unlearned, who do not yet believe, and the believers she instructs and confirms in the Faith.

2—*Let it not therefore be said that the ignorant and the uncultured are incapable of a true conversion to the faith on the grounds that they are not able to grasp the scientific arguments of the true Faith or the science of the various religions. Not to the learned alone does God manifest His truth. Even the uneducated with a right disposition of mind are able to acknowledge by the Grace of God the signs of God's presence in and His confirmation of the distinguished teachings of the Catholic Church, Her holy works and Her other characteristics. Moreover, freely co-operating with the same grace, they can firmly and reasonably believe in the divine revelation, "not because of its intrinsic truth grasped by the light of reason, but on account of the authority of the revealing God, Who neither can deceive nor is deceived".*

20.1—*The Church faithfully fulfils the mandate received from Christ to preach the Gospel to all peoples and nations and to lead all men to God. Neither has She ever ceased to propose Her doctrine nor will She ever relinquish this divine mission of Hers on earth; nor could She ever do so without giving the lie to Her very nature.*

2—*But however much we might desire that all enter into the one sheepfold of Christ as soon as possible, yet with the Supreme Pontiff Pius XII we profess "that of necessity it should be done freely and of one's own accord since no one believes unless he wants to. . . . If, therefore, it should happen that, contrary to the constant teaching of the Apostolic See, someone is unwillingly compelled to embrace the Catholic Faith, We, conscious of our responsibility, cannot but reprove it".*

22.1—*While we hold and teach that "those who are in an invincible ignorance of our most holy religion, but zealously keep the natural law and its precepts that are engraved by God in the hearts of all, and who are ready to obey God and live a righteous life, could, with the aid of divine grace and light working in them, attain eternal life, since God who fully sees, scrutinizes and knows all minds, consciences, thoughts and dispositions, will not, in accordance with his great goodness and clemency, allow to be punished by eternal damnation anyone who is not guilty of a voluntary fault", we at the same time believe and profess, that no one can be saved who of his own fault remains outside the Catholic Church.*

2—Imbued with the charity of Our Lord, we pressingly and lovingly invite all who do not belong to the visible Body of the Catholic Church to yield to the grace of God, and to enter into the sheepfold of Christ "since, even though they are

ordained by some unknown desire and wish to the Mystical Body of the Redeemer, they still lack so many and so great heavenly gifts and helps which can be enjoyed only in the Catholic Church". *Let all know that whatever true, good or beautiful things they by the gift of God already possess, they are not only not going to lose them in the paternal home of the Catholic Truth, but they will more fully and more safely preserve them, since all truth and goodness wherever in the whole world be it dispersed, is but a shadowed participation of that plenitude of goodness and truth which is revealed always to be more fully possessed in Christ Jesus.*

ON FOSTERING PREACHING TO NON-CHRISTIANS

163.1—" *The Church has been founded for nothing else than to spread the kingdom of Christ throughout the whole world and to make all men share in the fruits of redemption.*"

2—All who glory in the name of Christian should realize that the work of stabilising and propagating the Kingdom of Christ in these regions is not reserved to priests and missionaries, but is a work common to all, which each one according to his state should undertake.

"A Christian worthy of his name is always an apostle."

164.1—Let the pastors of souls not desist from teaching the faithful that all of them have been called by Christ to give testimony to the Christian Truth before all their fellow-citizens, and that they themselves, according to their state in life, will have to give an account before God concerning the salvation of the neighbour.

3—*Let all be mindful of the fact that for giving the above-mentioned testimony to Christ, it is in no wise sufficient to preach the Gospel with words; what is required is the testimony of a life imbued with faith and charity and conformed to the evangelical norms which we preach.*

165. To be sure, the testimony of the word ought to be joined to the testimony of one's life and although the work of making the Gospel known has because of its nature by law been entrusted especially to clerics and religious and above all to Priests, yet in a certain manner it pertains to all Christ's faithful, particularly to the members of Catholic Action groups. Wherefore, we demand that all should labour with us in the work of making the Gospel known.

166. Let all priests who have the care of souls, know that they are also missionaries. Therefore to them also has been entrusted the work of diligently labouring for the conversion of the non-Christians.

167.1—Where it can lead to the proposed end, the Ordinaries should not be afraid to allow with prudence and within the limits prescribed by the Holy See that missionaries either in

their exterior mode of living or in the works which they perform use new methods or methods formerly used with profit whereby they could come in closer contact with non-Christians and be more easily accepted by them.

168.1—*What happened to Christ Our Lord while living on the earth also happened to his Church in our region, namely that the poor and simple of heart have been found to be the more prepared to hear the word of God. But with the Apostle we are debtor to all men. Let the preacher of the word of God not be held back by the difficulties which are truly inherent to the work of evangelization among the more cultured and higher classes. Moreover, we wish that preachers, using apt means to be varied according to circumstances, and trusting fully in God, undertake a more methodical apostolate among them, and do so in a more direct way; and also explain to them the faith of Christ without reserve.*

2—In leading non-Catholics, especially the more learned, to the knowledge of the Truth, the Missionaries will laudably select apologetical and catechetical help from the religions and philosophies of India, by confirming and elaborating those things which are true in them, and by manifesting with charity errors that might be contained in them. However, this must be done with all due prudence and learning and in such a manner that the absolute transcendence and unicity of the Catholic Church clearly appears.

MISSIONARIES

170. In conversion work, which is supernatural, God has deigned to make use of the co-operation of men. The missionary therefore should realize that his work will be futile unless God plays a big part in it; and at the same time, he must bear in mind that human means are indispensable for success.

171.1—It follows, therefore, that before all things else, Missionaries should pray for those whose conversion they are to effect; in addition, they should encourage the faithful to pray both privately and publicly, that God may shower down his graces in abundance. They must incessantly seek the assistance of the Holy Spirit in their choice of means for this work and should entrust it with entirety to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

2—*The Missionaries should be so holy in the conduct of their lives, so selfless in their zeal for souls, that their very presence should reveal the sanctity and the divinity of the religion they profess. Conditions in this country being what they are, we especially recommend the virtues of simplicity, poverty and austerity, together with universal charity and love.*

172.1—On the human level, one of the most important qualities which Missionaries should cultivate, is a thorough knowledge of the language; nothing superficial will do; they

should be able to talk fluently and flawlessly with all those entrusted to their care, even the educated.

2—To facilitate this, we earnestly request the Ordinaries and Mission Superiors to give their subjects every opportunity for the study of the vernacular.

173.1—*Mission work demands a thorough understanding of the mentality of the people, and as much adaptation as is licit. Missionaries should take special care to acquaint themselves with the ways and manners of the people among whom they live, and should make it clear, as well in what they say as in what they do, that the sons of the Church of Christ—to be associated with her in the world over—must not abandon their national customs and qualities, provided, of course, these are not inextricably bound with superstition and error.*

2—*The conduct of the Missionaries should make it evident that the Church is not committed to any particular form of human culture; on the contrary, Catholic as she is, she not only approves of everything that is good in any civilization, but fosters it with a mother's care, in order to imbue it with the spirit of Christ.*

174. *The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith has issued an Instruction dated June 9th, 1939, which must be strictly adhered to. In consequence, we forbid any description, either in writing or in speech, of things Indian or missionary, of the condition of the people, their habits, their culture or their native qualities, which may give one the impression of an emphasis on the bad aspects rather than on the good ones. To do this, would be wrong, not to say unjust and uncharitable, because it gives rise to an incorrect and unfair general idea of a whole nation, based on particular cases.*

CATECHISTS

176. The Fathers assembled in the Council fully understand of how great a help and how useful it is for the conversion of the non-Christians to call to the aid of the Missionaries some lay Catechists chosen from among the faithful themselves, and they adhere whole-heartedly to the instructions given by the Holy See on this subject.

177. Such Catechists should be chosen, who with their words and especially by the example of their lives may attract the non-Christians to Christ; and who themselves well versed in the Catholic teachings have a pleasing way of proposing them to the non-Christians and are capable of answering the usual difficulties that both non-Christians and non-Catholics may put against religion.

CATECHUMENS AND NEW-CONVERTS

181. *Only those are to be admitted as catechumens* who are prompted by an honest motive even if as yet it be only a natural one, and of whom there is a real hope that they will adhere to Christ faithfully. And where it is possible, the Missionary should inquire even from others about the life and good name of those who ask for instruction and, if such be the case, about their marriage and especially about the validity of the matrimonial consent.*

182. *If an entire village or an entire community wishes to receive instruction, let the Missionaries clearly state that no adult can be admitted to baptism unless he himself freely desires to receive it.*

183. *In such a great variety of persons and conditions it is impossible to lay down a fixed rule about the time that has to be spent in the instruction of the Catechumens. Let the general principle be this: No one is to be admitted to baptism without having been first fully instructed about the most important truths of our religion and about the commandments to be observed, and without at the same time having acquired sufficiently the practices of Christian life, so that it can be reasonably hoped that once baptized they will persevere faithfully even when difficulties arise.*

184. *After having conferred Baptism, the Missionary and the Catechists should pay frequent visits to the new converts, in order to complete their instruction and confirm them in the practice of a true Christian life. Their steadiness depends so much on this solicitous care.*

CERTAIN MEANS OF SPREADING THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FAITH AMONG NON-CHRISTIANS

185. *The Fathers sternly desire that those works of true Christian Charity, as distribution of medicine to the poor, hospitals, maternity homes, homes for the aged and others alike—for which the Church of Christ shines among the nations—should be more and more increased.*

187. *We recommend that, wherever it is possible, some priests well versed in and given to studies of languages, customs, philosophy and religion of India be set aside who may apply themselves to apologetical and catechetical work among the educated.*

188. *Together with the increase of the desire for reading, there increases also the opportunity of spreading through the press the Faith and Catholic principles among all ranks of people. It is our duty to make use of these opportunities in the service of truth. . . .*

2—The prescriptions of Can. 1386 C.J.C. being kept in view, let the writers, eminent in doctrine and in the way of

* Catechumens = men offering themselves for baptism.

presenting it, expose the Catholic doctrine and its principles in a non-controversial way as occasion offers in magazines and other periodicals widely spread among non-Catholics.

3—Should non-Christians attack the Catholic Religion or anything pertaining to it, as it happens in periodicals and newspapers, it is allowed with the Bishop's consent, to answer them, provided it is done with moderation and with the greatest charity and love of truth, these being the signs of the doctrine of Christ.

190.1—Since the doctrine of the Church concerning the promotion of social order has remained almost unknown by the non-Catholics of our country, or has even been exposed by the enemies of the Church, after having been wickedly distorted, we beseech all the faithful, clerics as well as lay people, not to miss any occasion to present and explain to the non-Catholics this doctrine, and in the same time to show the absolute necessity of its practical application, so that the social order may be successfully promoted. Let them always remember that words contradicted by action are nearly useless.

2—We desire that the principles of this doctrine should be explained in detail by an expert priest or layman to the non-Catholic pupils of our schools and colleges.

CONCERNING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTION

JUSTICE

42.1—It is surely not the task of the Church to determine a definite form of management or of organization of the technical things in order to promote the social and economic order.

But undoubtedly it is Hers to declare what the moral law requires in these (technical things) and what the same law forbids.

2—Certainly the Church has condemned as execrable those economic methods in which those who enjoy the economic power lead the workmen or the proletarian class to such an end and condition that business and even the whole economy are turned to their will and comfort, despising the human dignity of the workmen, the social nature of the economy, and the very idea of social justice and common good.

3—The moral law requires that the social and economic order should as far as possible be promoted and controlled in such a way that those goods which are needed to satisfy necessities and honest comforts should reach also the huge and poor multitude of our farmers, the workmen and other labourers. For it is necessary that they also, as well as the others, may employ and develop entirely all their faculties in praise and glory of their Creator; and, by fulfilling faithfully the duty of their trade or of their other vocation, they may achieve for themselves temporal together with eternal happiness.

4—In case such promoting and control cannot be put fully into practice on account of the present economic condition of the country, it is, yet, evident that even in the present times many poor farmers and labourers ought to be provided for in a better manner. Those who preside over the promotion of the economic order are bound by the obligation to foster, as early as possible, those conditions which may permit the required production and distribution of wealth which to all is due according to the norm of social justice.

43.1—We directly warn all and especially clerics, religious and administrators of ecclesiastical affairs that they must give to the labourers a honest and just salary in contracting works, and that they are not allowed to impose on them (labourers) more work than their strength can bear, nor such kind of work which is not becoming to age or sex. (Can. 1524.)

2—We warn the labourers also that they are bound in justice to faithfully carry out the works which they have undertaken according to a just contract.

SOCIAL ACTION

153.1—"The Catholic Church has been so fashioned and instituted that it always furnishes to states and peoples not only no detriment, but rather many and suitable advantages even of a temporal nature."

2—By its very sound and firm doctrine, by its indefatigable zeal for justice and by its treasure of charity, the Church has the power to offer singular help for wholesomely renewing and perfecting the order of the whole of society.

3—Moreover, it is the duty of the whole body of all the faithful, clerical and lay, to extend this benefit of the Church to the State.

154.1—"Therefore all are exhorted to strive under the leadership and guidance of the Church to contribute whatever they, according to their individual talent, strength and condition, are able to offer for wholesome organization of social life. Let all know that each one, in his own order and place, is able to do much provided he is ready for strenuous labour. But let them beware lest they ever, by desire of attracting the masses, water down the principles proposed by the Church or utter false promises.

2—Moreover it is of the greatest importance that all the faithful put into practice firmly and courageously the principles of this doctrine, lest it be said that Catholic social doctrine is very good indeed, but that the social action of the Catholics is very meagre.

POLITICS

75. *The clerics should never dare to employ the authority of their ecclesiastical state in order to promote the cause of political or popular parties.*

147.3—In order to avoid all confusion in this affair, we forbid all those who are actually presiding in any political party or hold in that (party) any office of importance, from taking part in the direction of Catholic Action.

159. *The faithful ought also to take interest, according to their possibilities in the political affairs of the town, of the province, of the state. In fact to care for the government and to take part in its activities is a duty of patriotism precisely because every citizen must, according to his power, provide for the good of his country.*

160. Lay people, even members of Catholic Action, may seek membership in political parties, with the exception stated in n. 147.3, and on condition that these parties do not profess as doctrine nor *de facto* promote with their labour what is offensive to the divine and ecclesiastical law and if the adherence does not create for the faithful a danger of faith or morals.

229. Since it is well known that new political parties are continuously coming up, while those which already exist do change their programmes and resolutions very often, we think it is not expedient to express any judgement about the membership of Catholics in the political parties now existing, with the exception of what has been said in nn. 227, 228. But we enjoin the faithful to make suitable investigations before adhering to any political party.

161. All should remember that it is up to the Bishops to declare to the faithful whether the intention or the activity of any political party offend against God's law or that of the Church, and to warn the faithful who are their subjects against the danger of faith and morals or harm to the Church that might result from their adherence to any such party, and for this reason even to forbid their membership.

162. In order to foster a greater unity, judgement regarding the programme of political parties as far as they concern faith and morals is to be referred to the Conference of the Bishops of India.

175.1—*By canon law it is forbidden to clerics "to help in any way internal wars and perturbations of public order" (Can. 141). Therefore they must abstain from all party-politics.*

2—*The priests and the religious who are citizens of this country shall exercise their political rights and as citizens they may rightly have their political opinions and manifest them as private opinions. But the exercise of this right must never be an impediment to the efficacious exercise of their ministry. Since, however, as priests and shepherds of the people they have*

a public state in the Church and represent Her before the people, they must abstain from giving their name to any political faction.

3—*Foreign Missionaries, however, rejecting any care for political affairs, should speak and act with entire sincerity, in such a way that it must be clear to all that they have come here only for a supernatural purpose and for the advantage of the people, and that they intensely wish the good of this nation. They must inculcate in all the virtue of love towards the country and due obedience to the civil authorities.*

4—To no Missionary it is ever allowed to take part to any manifestation of political parties without the permission of the Ordinary of the place.

5—It is left to the Local Ordinaries to interpret in concrete cases what is said above and to complete it when necessary.

211.2—*We strictly forbid anyone to talk of political affairs in sermons and instructions, or of any other matter which may offer an occasion of reasonable offence to anyone.*

SOCIAL ACTION

156.1—We demand that those faithful who are imbued with the principles of social doctrine and are instructed to exercise the apostolate, should strive with all their strength to make known to all the principles of Catholic social doctrine, and should work for their application to practical life.

2—But they should know that a very careful intellectual preparation must precede all action in life, so that they may see clearly by what reason and in which way the social and economic problems should be solved in a Christian manner.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

74.1—Without consent of their Ordinary, clerics are not allowed to give or receive loans, or to undertake the administration of goods of lay people, even their relatives, or of works erected for the temporal welfare of the faithful and involving the duty of rendering accounts.

2—*Let them be mindful that theirs is the duty to show the way to the faithful by their example in practically applying the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church and in obeying the legitimate precepts of the civil authority.*

SCHOOLS

236. As it is evident from daily experience that school education often exercises no smaller influence than the family itself in forming men truly faithful to Christ and His Church, we are under a grave necessity of striving hard, in order that, as far as possible, all Catholic children and youth may have the opportunity of being educated in Catholic schools truly imbued with the Christian spirit.

240. *The primary end of all schools and colleges meant for Catholics is to make it possible for all Catholic students to be educated according to sound Catholic principles, and according to a method of instruction truly imbued with the Catholic spirit.*

244. *Let our schools and colleges conform themselves to the culture, institutions and characteristics of the country, nay more, we ought to strive that even in civil and profane matters they be not inferior to any other.*

CHARITY

28.1—*Though it is proper that Christian Charity should flourish especially among those of the household of the Faith, yet it is universal and it embraces all men, all classes of citizens and peoples. He who excludes from his love either his enemies or his country, or even the enemies of the Church and of the very name of Christ violates the precept of charity.*

2—It is expedient that this charity should be active and not only interior; but let it express itself in words and deeds, according to the example of Christ who gave Himself up for all men, and like that of the Apostle who made himself all things to all men that he might gain them for Christ.

231. In the first place we exhort all the faithful whilst detesting all error itself to embrace with great charity all those who err. "Let us then recognize all those who are not yet united with us in the Body of the Church as brothers of Christ according to the flesh, destined with us to the same eternal salvation." Let them show that this charity is quite sincere, not only by their words but also by their deeds and mutual help.

APPENDIX II

1. POPE PIUS XII ON NATIONAL CULTURES

. . . The nations, despite their differences of development due to diverse conditions of life and of culture, are not destined to break the unity of the human race but rather to enrich and embellish it by the sharing of their own peculiar gifts and by that reciprocal interchange of goods, which can be possible and efficacious only when a mutual love and a lively sense of Charity unite all the sons of the same Father and all those redeemed by the same divine Blood.

The Church of Christ, the faithful repository of the teaching of divine wisdom, cannot and does not think of depreciating or disdaining the particular characteristics which each people with jealous and intelligible pride cherishes and retains

as a precious heritage. Her aim is a supernatural union in all-embracing love, deeply felt and practised, and not uniformity, which is merely external and would cramp the natural tendencies of the nations concerned. . . .

She has repeatedly shown in her missionary enterprises that such a principle of action is the guiding star of her universal apostolate. Pioneer research and investigation involving sacrifice, devotedness and love on the part of the missionaries of every age have been undertaken in order to facilitate the deeper appreciative insight into the most varied civilizations and to put their values to account for a living and vital preaching of the Gospel of Christ. Anything that in such usages and customs is not inseparably bound up with religious errors, will always be treated with consideration, and when it is found possible will be sponsored and developed.

Those who enter the Church, whatever their race or their speech, must know that they have equal rights as children in the house of the Lord, where the law of Christ and the peace of Christ prevail. . . .

Nor is there any fear lest the consciousness of universal brotherhood aroused by the teachings of Christianity, and the spirit which it inspires, be in contrast with love of the traditions or the glories of one's motherland, or prevent the promotion of its prosperity and legitimate interests. For that same Christianity teaches that in the exercise of charity we must follow a God-given order yielding the place of honour in our affections and good works to those who are bound to us by special ties. Nay, the Divine Master Himself gave an example of this preference for His own country and motherland as He wept over the coming destruction of the Holy City. But legitimate and well-ordered love of our native country should not make us close our eyes to the all-embracing nature of Christian charity, which calls for consideration of others and of their interests in the pacifying light of love.

Encyclical 'Summi Pontificatus'.

2. MISSIONS AND NATIONAL CULTURE

"On June 24th Pope Pius XII received members of the Pontifical Missionary Societies and of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide. Addressing those present, the Holy Father insisted on the particular significance of the truly international character of the missions: 'That is why We now in this wide conflict, again look into the future with a steady eye because the work meanwhile has been conscientiously based on giving the missions a character not foreign but corresponding to the country of their activity. Hence the need for native clergy and students, and "hence the principle that characteristic native

customs should be upheld so long as they are compatible with Divine Law." The Missionary is the apostle of Jesus Christ. His task is not to transplant European culture into the missionary lands, but to make people who have in some cases a thousand-years-old culture, ready and able to adopt the elements of Christian life and behaviour. These elements of Christian life are quite easily and naturally harmonized with any sane and healthy culture, to which they will give the power of full blossoming. Native Catholics must be truly members of God's family and citizens of His Kingdom without thereby ceasing to remain citizens of their motherlands. It is the great aim of the missions to introduce the Church into new regions, and to let it take root, so that one day it will be able to live and develop without the assistance of missionaries. The work lives not for its own ends; it retires as soon as it has reached its aim."

(From 'The Tablet' 8-7-44)

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM MGR. EUGENE D'SOUZA, ARCHBISHOP OF NAGPUR, TO THE SECRETARY, CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

The Catholic Bishops of Madhya Pradesh, on behalf of the Catholic Community of Madhya Pradesh, beg to submit the following Memorandum anent the recent Questionnaire issued by the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee:

1. It is difficult to see how such a strange Questionnaire could be issued by an impartial Committee. A cursory perusal of the 99 questions suffices to convince one of the basic mistrust on the part of those who have framed it. Its whole spirit is repugnant to the tenets of toleration of our sovereign Democratic Republic. To say the least, it is an aspersion on the numerous Christians, who are rendering yeoman service to the country in all walks of life.

2. It is rather unfortunate that there are certain basic assumptions that are underlying some of the questions, which are themselves unwarranted and unproved, and which consequently vitiate the whole tenor of the Questionnaire. The following assumptions are illustrative but not exhaustive:

- (a) *It is assumed that illiterate persons are only sub-human beings, incapable of choosing and following a religion by conviction.*—The doctrine that only the literate and erudite can choose a religion and way of life belongs to a particular school of thought, possessed by an infinitesimal minority and opposed to the view of the over-

whelming majority of the population of India. This doctrine is opposed to the principle on which adult franchise has been based and therefore alien to the basic principles of our Constitution. The assumption is also false and dangerous that the right and appreciation of religion is limited only to a few.

- (b) *It is assumed that Christians must have been compelled by force, fraud or monetary temptations.*—This assumption, we respectfully submit, begs the very question which the Committee has been called upon to investigate. If there are definite allegations on record it is the duty of the Committee to go into these allegations and arrive at findings; we fail to see how any useful purpose will be served by calling in further and fresh allegations. Throughout the exploratory tours of the Committee they have not come across a single instance of a specific allegation with details about force or fraud or monetary temptations in the case of conversion to Christianity. What then is the purpose of this assumption in eliciting public information on a matter which has no grounds in the field of actual events?
- (c) *It is assumed that Christians are not and cannot be loyal citizens of India, because they have changed their faith.*—This is a reflection on the entire Christian minority of ten million citizens of India. We would respectfully point out that nowhere in the country have Christians been accused by their very worst opponents of being disloyal to the motherland. We feel, therefore, compelled to record our most vehement protest against this aspersion on the Christian Community.
- (d) *It is assumed that Christian Missionaries have ulterior motives besides preaching the message of Christ.*—We respectfully submit that this is "the unkindest cut of all" as it damns the Missionary for a suspected motive against which he can only offer a bare denial. The life of self-sacrifice and service that he brings to bear on his work is deliberately brushed aside and prejudiced in the eyes of the public. In the absence of any evidence it is submitted that this assumption results in discrimination against Christian Missionaries.

3. In the Resolution No. 318-716-V-Con. of the Madhya Pradesh Government, dated the 14th April 1954, it has been stated "that representations have been made to the Government from time to time" about the activities of Christian Missionaries. We are not aware of any step whatsoever that has been taken by the Enquiry Committee to ascertain or collect what the representations were that were made prior to 14th April 1954. The Questionnaire, we feel, aims at collecting more

allegations instead of going into the allegations already on record. It is not known also whether answers submitted by persons or organisations against Christian Missionary Activities would be submitted to the scrutiny of the defence, or whether the defence would be afforded the opportunity of cross-examining persons submitting reports under oath.

91 out of the 99 questions contained in the Questionnaire bear on the activities of Christian Missionaries, Christian converts and Christian Institutions, and on most of these questions, the views and opinions of the people are sought; it is felt that the opportunity is further afforded for fresh outbursts of communal frenzy against Christians and Christian Missionaries. In paragraph 3 of the Resolution of the Madhya Pradesh Government, dated the 14th April 1954, the Enquiry Committee has been asked only to "enquire into the questions mentioned in the preamble and to report to Government *what the facts are*". It is respectfully submitted that an expression of opinions and views will not enable any enquiry body to ascertain the facts in dispute or even to gauge the actual situation.

Even the unbiased Questionnaire is notoriously unreliable as a method of enquiry and is seldom used in scientific investigation without adequate and suitable safeguards. The collation and interpretation of answers requires men with special training.

4. Another feature of this Questionnaire, which is true also of the enquiry in general, is that, starting as an enquiry into the activities of Christian Missionaries, presumably in relation to those outside the Christian community, it has become in some respects an enquiry into the activities of the Christian Church as a whole.

Evidence of this unwarranted widening of the scope of the enquiry is to be found in the nature of some of the questions. It would appear that the whole community is on trial. Fundamental Rights guaranteed to all persons by the Constitution appear to be questioned. Neither the terms of reference of the Committee nor the situation in the country justify the singling out of the Christian community for such treatment or the expectation that Christians should do such things which are not required of others.

In spite of these drawbacks in the Questionnaire, we wish to place on record certain observations regarding a few fundamental questions touched on in the Questionnaire (*vide Appendix*). We trust these observations will help both Government as well as the Enquiry Committee, to view things in their proper perspective.

Before we conclude, we, the Catholic Bishops of Madhya Pradesh, wish to take this opportunity of expressing our disappointment at the whole procedure of the Enquiry, as also

our deep concern at the distressing trend of events in the State during the recent months. The Committee is no doubt aware of the two foul murders of Christians that have taken place in this State a few months ago. These are only the outcome of communal frenzy that has been worked up by the interested agencies. Whether this feeling of communal bitterness has been the aftermath of the tours, it is left for the fair-mindedness of the members of the Committee to decide.

The Questionnaire that has just been issued is an aspersion on the fair name of the Christian community. Apart from the insinuations contained therein, the wording of some of the questions in this document is very unfortunate; the questions are bound to invite malicious answers. It may interest the Committee to know that all sections of people in the country, even outside the Christian fold, have been shocked on perusing the Questionnaire.

We, therefore, respectfully submit, in view of all these circumstances, that no useful purpose would be served by our continued co-operation and contribution of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Appendix

OBSERVATIONS AGAINST CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS TOUCHED ON IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. There is a prevailing misconception regarding conversions. Conversions are not effected by Missionaries. It is the would-be convert himself, who, by a personal act of free-will, chooses to adhere to a given religion.

In the Catholic Church this freedom of choice is enjoined by law and scrupulously adopted in practice. "No adult may be baptised except with his full knowledge and unless he expresses a wish to be baptised, has been well instructed in religion and repents of his sins." (Can. 752, para 1.)

The utmost care is taken that the freedom of the convert is respected. No one is ever baptised except after a long course of religious instructions lasting for months and sometimes for years. During that period each one remains perfectly free to withdraw, and there have been many cases of such withdrawals, i.e. of persons who freely underwent a course of religious instruction, who withdrew before the time of baptism.

Finally, before actually undergoing the ceremony of Baptism, each individual is again asked: "Do you wish to be baptised?" If he answers "No", or expresses doubt, he will not be baptised. To do otherwise would be considered a sacrilege by every Catholic priest.

II. In their eagerness to explain away conversions, some would ascribe to the Missionary mean and unworthy motives, namely prestige, political power, etc. In reality, nothing will explain the life of a Missionary, unless one realizes that it is inspired solely by the love of God, and His Son, Jesus Christ, as well as by the love of men. Missionaries believe that these two motives are inseparable, and that there can be no love for God without an ætíve love for men, even to the sacrifice of self: nor any love for men without a deep love for God.

This alone prompts them to spend their lives, often under very trying circumstances, for the propagation of these ideals and thoughts which inspire their lives and in which they find such light and strength.

Their ideal of the love of men for the sake of God explains also why they serve the whole man, with not only the spiritual, but also the economic and cultural needs. All these needs are inseparable, and it is useless to say that one loves one's neighbour, if one lets him die of hunger. Besides, no spiritual or cultural life is possible without the minimum of material comfort and security. Hence, right from her very earliest days, and long before any State, the Catholic Church has interested Herself in the lives of the poor and sick and down-trodden, and has continued doing so throughout the centuries. By taking interest in their well-being, Missionaries do not buy converts. Conversions without faith are as abhorrent to Christian Missionaries as to anyone else.

But, if people see men devoting themselves selflessly and wholeheartedly to their well-being and believe in these men and desire to adhere to a religion in which they see such generous charity practised as well as preached, are they not at liberty to do so?

III. It is further argued that illiterate persons are not capable of choosing a religion.

Religion is from God and necessarily connotes love and justice. It is evident, therefore, that religion is meant for all men and not for the cultured few only. In fact, it is the poor and the down-trodden who are most in need of the consolations of religion.

Therefore, it must be possible, and experience has shown it is perfectly possible for the unsophisticated to grasp the things of God.

We respectfully maintain that because the Adivasis or Backward Tribes may be illiterate or down-trodden, they are not stupid or devoid of commonsense. The honesty and shrewdness in barter or money-dealings of these is proverbial. They often exhibit more commonsense than many who have allowed themselves to be spoiled by modern civilisation. Illiterate persons may not be able to reach religious truths in the same way

as philosophers, but they are perfectly capable of seeing clearly what is really good and thus, to judge its truth and decide whether or not they ought to adopt a given religion.

The Indian Constitution considers all citizens as capable of enjoying adult franchise and of judging the merits of the various parties, why should this capacity be denied in the case of religion only?

IV. It has repeatedly been said that Missionaries establish schools for the sake of effecting conversions, or organise social works for the same purpose. It has always been our practice, in our Missions, to start schools and social works only when the people have been converted, and sometimes very long after such conversions. It is only when there are a number of Catholics, whom Missionaries have the responsibility to educate, that schools and social works are started for their benefit. These schools are open to every pupil, irrespective of creed or caste, but no non-Catholic pupil is ever taught the Catholic religion without his consent and with the free consent of his parents or guardians.

In conclusion, the only method consistently used by Catholic Missionaries among Tribals and others has been to identify themselves with them and live among them, and treat them as men endowed with commonsense, and try to bring around their all-round social, cultural and spiritual uplift, and after their conversion, if circumstances permit it, to see to the educational and economic progress of the Catholic community.

V. The other major accusation is that Missions are used directly or indirectly for purposes of political or extra-religious activities. It is rather unfortunate that the insinuation that Missionaries are dabbling in politics and have some political aims in view is so persistently repeated in reports against Missionaries, that now it appears to be taken for granted.

We respectfully maintain that Catholic Missionaries, on principle, are absolutely forbidden from entering the political arena, and as a point of fact, nowhere in the State have they used their Missions or Missionaries for any political purposes. The Enquiry Committee will, perhaps, bear witness to the fact that whereas many general allegations were made against the Missionaries on this point, while they were on their tours, no specific instances were forthcoming substantiated by facts.

In this connection, we give here the directives of the Plenary Council of all the Catholic Bishops (held in January 1950)—

“ Let foreign Missionaries free from political bias, so speak and act with complete sincerity that the spiritual mission of their ministry in the country, and their interest in the welfare of the people is clear to all, as also their ardent desire for the good of the nation. Let them foster above

all the virtue of patriotism and due obedience to civil authorities."

This, sir, is one of the many documents that contain solemn injunctions for all Catholic Priests and Missionaries. They are meant to be taken as a safe norm of conduct. "They are at the same time a proof that in case of errors by Missionaries, we have the machinery for controlling them without the intervention of the secular power. Above all, these documents do honour to the Church and her regard for non-Christian civilizations; they disabuse our Hindu friends and national leaders of any impression they may have that the Catholic Church is an unfriendly institution."—(*Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay.*)

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA ADDRESSED TO CATHOLICS ON JANUARY 13, 1957

Recent events compel us to speak on the suspicion and distrust with which the Catholic community, in common with other Christian denominations, has been regarded in certain parts of India. We are glad to acknowledge and place on record that this suspicion and distrust are not general among our countrymen. In fact, many prominent leaders, official and non-official, have deprecated this tendency and dissociated themselves from it. On the other hand, individuals and communal organizations have given vent to a display of an intolerance towards the Christian people, which is disconcerting, accustomed as we have been to a tolerance that has prevailed for centuries in the country. This cloud of suspicion may dissipate itself in the natural course of events, but we consider it our duty to address you, before it spreads over the whole community and prejudices the people against us. And in doing so, we are glad that we are reinforcing the splendid efforts of the Catholic laity who, individually and collectively, have rallied at this juncture to the defence of the Church and its divine mission in India. We are indeed proud of them.

The movement started, as you are aware, in the States of Madhya Pradesh and Madhya Bharat, where the Governments appointed Committees to inquire into the activities of Christian missionaries in their respective States. The origin of the Madhya Pradesh Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee is, according to its own Report, attributed to the fact "that it had been represented to Government from time to

time that the conversion of illiterate aborigines and other backward people was effected by Christian missionaries either forcibly or through fraud or temptation of monetary gain and the Government were informed that the feelings of non-Christians were being offended by conversions brought about by such methods". We are not told anything specific about these allegations, nor the people who made them, so that the public could evaluate their worth.

If however the Government of Madhya Pradesh had appointed a more representative Committee of Enquiry, there might have been a greater likelihood of impartiality and independence of judgment. But the Committee was composed, all except one, of Hindus, representatives of the very community that had made the allegations against Christian missionaries. The exception was a Christian utterly unrepresentative of the Christian community and one whose Christian allegiance itself has been called into question. It is known to all how the Christian of the Committee had on the eve of the enquiry, at a public meeting, condemned what he called "Christian missionary imperialism". The lengthy questionnaire—made up of 99 questions—one of the longest, if not the longest, issued in the history of Commissions of Enquiry in this country—contained a number of leading questions showing the bias and prejudice of the Committee, even before the enquiry started. The methods used by the Committee in the course of their proceedings—the selection of witnesses, the lack of facilities of the defenders of Christian missionaries for cross-examination of witnesses—could not create any confidence in the impartiality of the Committee or its findings. The distrust and protest of the Catholic community at the very outset in the work of the Committee has been fully justified by the Report. We do not wish to comment on the body of the Report. This has already been done effectively by Catholic Associations and individuals, lay and clerical, all over the country. It will be reviewed in detail in a symposium of Catholic writers which will soon be published.

One truth we wish to emphasize, a truth which has not been comprehended by the Committee in question, due either to total ignorance or wilful misunderstanding of the mission of Christianity in general or of the Catholic Church in particular. Christianity is a religion that our Divine Founder has directed to be preached to the whole world. "Go ye therefore and preach to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost." That was the command Christ gave to His Apostles and their successors. The Church He founded was to be, and is a universal Church, at home in every country, and among all people. Catholicism is nowhere an alien creed; it is the swadeshi religion of every land. At the

very beginning, it broke the shell of Judaism from which it emerged. Going over to Rome and the Roman Empire, it became as universal as the Roman Empire. And when national states were set up in Europe, this supra-national character and function of the Church was recognized by King as well as Emperor, by Parliaments and by peoples alike. The Popes and the Sacred Congregations had jurisdiction over each and every one of the Catholic peoples of Europe and later, of America and then of the rest of the world. Here, in India, the Catholic Church has been recognized in Moghul and in British times as a supra-national Church. After independence, we gratefully acknowledge that this recognition has been confirmed by the Government of free and independent India in granting rights of representation to the Vatican by the Papal Internuncio at New Delhi.

The Madhya Pradesh Enquiry Committee has recommended the formation of a national, independent Christian Church, independent of any external authority. This is perhaps based on the deplorable precedent set up by the Protestants in establishing National Christian Church. A National Hierarchy—that is the legitimate aspiration of every national Catholic community—and here in India, every year records progress in this direction; but a National Christian Church, envisaged by the Committee is wholly incompatible with the idea and institution of the "One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church" which we have inherited from the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

At the beginning of this year, we would ask the clergy and laity of our Dioceses, to dedicate themselves jointly to the strengthening of this One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. To endeavour to make the Church in India conform more closely to the ideal of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, is the best and most effective reply we can offer to the Madhya Pradesh Enquiry Committee's Report. Not only to emphasize the spiritual unity of the Church, but to strengthen the social solidarity of Catholics shall be our answer to the attempt to cast aspersions on our Missionaries from abroad who are as much our pastors as those of Indian origin. To make ourselves holier than before, for laymen especially to make their light shine among their fellow-countrymen, must be our reaction to the attempts to stem the spread of Christianity in India. To strengthen our ties with the Church of the Apostles and deepen our loyalty to the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, the Head of the Church, shall be our response to the recommendation to establish an independent National Church in India.

The appointment of the Enquiry Committee, its report, the favourable reception it has received from some sections of the public, should not press us, the clergy and the laity, to adopt an apologetic attitude. Far from it; we should consider all

these a challenge to live and grow in Christian practice and virtue. Holiness is the characteristic note of the Catholic Church and ought to be the note of the life of every Catholic. By the fruits of holiness they shall know us. Love is the other great distinguishing mark of Christianity. The suspicion and distrust with which Christianity has come to be looked upon must be dispelled by greater service to our countrymen through the works of charity and mercy which the love of Christ inspires in us. The attacks on the missionary activities of Christianity must remind us of the discipline with which the Church has always defended itself and which has accounted for its security and success everywhere and at all times. But this discipline cannot be satisfied with a merely passive attitude to the life around us. It calls for concerted action. We must defend our rights and liberties, so wisely provided for and guaranteed by the Constitution of India.

APPENDIX F

STATEMENT BY DR. JOHN MATTHAI, VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF BOMBAY, AND FORMER FINANCE MINISTER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, ON AUGUST 3, 1956, ON THE NIYOGI REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

"The policy of Government as declared by the Prime Minister more than once in Parliament and elsewhere leaves no room for doubt that neither the secular character of the State nor the religious freedom guaranteed by the Constitution are in the least at stake. I have personally discussed the subject with the Prime Minister and with the Home Minister of the Central Government and also with the Chief Minister of Bombay, and I have every confidence that the rights of Christians in India as a community and as a religious organisation will be fully respected.

"The issue under discussion relates primarily to foreign missionaries working in India. I have known many of them personally in various parts of the country and have come to regard them not merely with respect but with affection. No class of foreigners working in India during the past hundred years have by and large served the country with greater zeal and interest than missionaries. In the field of education, medical relief and social service generally, they have achieved a record which deserves greater recognition than has been so far accorded.

"Speaking as one who, although a Christian, has watched the work of missionaries with the detached outlook of a student

of public affairs, I have no hesitation in saying that whatever their failings, these are outweighed by what they have done in the cause of building up a self-respecting and self-reliant India.

"No one is more conscious than Christians and missionaries themselves, of the weak spots in the missionary movement. They arise mainly from the fact that during the 19th century, the period of imperialism, the missionary in the religious field as the civil servant in the administrative field and the trader and technician in the business field came to be looked upon as agents of colonialism and bearers of the White Man's Burden.

"Nobody was more painfully aware of what this implied for missionaries than their own leaders and it was from their conversation and teaching, as a student in the leading Christian College in the South, that I began to realise the Western character that Christianity had assumed in India and the need for presenting it as a religion of Eastern Origin and akin closely to the spiritual instincts of the Indian people. The general attack that is now launched against them among certain sections of the public is not merely unfair but ill-founded.

"If some of them have been found guilty of misconduct either in respect of India's foreign relations or in respect of inter-communal feelings, the Government have enough power to deal with it and nobody can complain of whatever action Government may think fit to take. But this is a matter of dealing by appropriate means with individuals who have broken the law or acted against the public interest. It is no justification for the vast generalisations which are sometimes made against missionaries as a whole and against the Christian Church here and abroad.

"The kind of cultural and spiritual autarchy which is now advocated in certain quarters is so inconsistent with the traditions and spirit of the country that it must seem to outsiders a sign of a growing lack of confidence in ourselves and a decline in our moral standards. The wonderful work accomplished by Buddhist missionaries in nearby Asian countries has left permanent marks on the civilisation and culture of these countries. Even today missionaries of the Ramakrishna Mission are found in European countries and in America working with a zeal and disinterestedness which have earned them widespread appreciation.

"There was a time when India was a haven of refuge for people suffering religious persecution in other countries, in the same way as England offered an asylum to those persecuted for political reasons abroad. Surely the advent of independence is not going to leave us less and not more tolerant than we have been in the past.

"There is no doubt that recent discussions have considerably disturbed the Christian community in India. Whether

they are right in feelings so disturbed is open to question. But I would respectfully suggest to those in authority that it is a mistake both politically and from the point of view of India's growing prestige abroad that this should be allowed to happen."

APPENDIX VI

STATEMENT OF PROMINENT INDIAN PUBLIC MEN ISSUED IN 1956

We have had the opportunity of close contact with the work of different types of Christian institutions over a period of years. Some of us have been students in Christian schools and colleges, while others have reason to be grateful for the skill and care available in Christian hospitals and hostels. Some of us have seen at close range the work of Christian Missionary establishments of different kinds. Most of us have counted individual Christian Missionaries among our friends and counsellors.

It has pained us to see lately a tendency to indulge in indiscriminate and extravagant attacks on missionaries and their activities. Sometimes these attacks have also taken in their sweep our countrymen who are Christians.

We wish to pay tribute to the high standards of integrity and public service generally maintained by Christian Missionaries in their work. We have learnt a great deal from the traditions of selfless service they have established. It is not our experience that they seek to undermine patriotic or national loyalties. While they make no secret of their own faith in their religious tenets, they have maintained in general standards of intellectual honesty and fair play in their dealings with their wards and constituents. To their example some of us owe a great deal.

We would appeal to our fellow-citizens to discount irresponsible and unfair criticism and to remember that above all we owe a loyalty to Truth and that as a country we need to develop further the traditions of tolerance and unity in diversity which form a cherished part of our Indian heritage.

We are glad to record our appreciation and gratitude for the inspiration and impetus Christian Missionary activities have given in our march forward as a nation.

1. (Dr.) P. A. Krishnaswami, M.P., U.N. Special 'Rapporteur'.
2. (Dr.) P. Subharayan, M.P., Formerly Chief Minister of Madras & Indian Ambassador to Indonesia.
3. Jadunath Sarkar, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University.

4. P. N. Saprú, M.P. (Rajya Sabha), Ex-Judge, Allahabad High Court.
 5. Surendra Nath Sen, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta, Sheriff of Calcutta.
 6. Satis Chandra Ghosh, Mayor of Calcutta.
 7. Teja Singh, Retd. Chief Justice of the PEPSU High Court, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University.
 8. P. Parija, Vice-Chancellor, Utkal University, Cuttack.
 9. B. V. Narayana Reddy, General Manager, Bank of Mysore, Bangalore.
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PART II

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THE BACKGROUND OF THE NIYOGI REPORT

By

G. X. FRANCIS

Journalists resort to certain cliches in presenting their story in the shortest available space. Therefore the Resolution dated 14th April 1954 appointing the Niyogi Enquiry Committee with which this article should begin is relegated to the appendix. But please read it first, before taking up the succeeding paragraphs.

Anyone reading this Resolution is liable to ask: "What is wrong with this Resolution? Any Government worth the name which has received incriminating reports against missionaries, would have ordered an enquiry into the correctness or otherwise of such reports. Indeed, Christians and Christian missionaries should welcome the step taken by the Government of Pandit Shukla instead of raising a hue and cry about it."

I am unfolding the background story of the Niyogi Enquiry for the benefit of these honest fellow-countrymen.

In order to evaluate the event of the 14th April 1954, I have to carry the reader to the 1st January 1948 when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel liquidated the Princely Order and integrated their States with the various provinces. In one day, all the yellow spots which were spread over one-third of the pink map of British India were completely wiped out, and the Republic emerged as a solid whole. Notwithstanding this complete disintegration of the Rajahs and Maharajahs and their kingdoms, a curious event took place in a remote corner of Madhya Pradesh, on the 18th April 1948—three and a half months after the integration which, when the full particulars came to be known later, shocked the Christians of Madhya Pradesh.

The remote corner was the former State of Udaipur, a territory smaller than a tahsil in the present district of Raigarh, situated between three former "kingdoms" of Raigarh, Jashpur and Surguja. The event which took place on the 18th April was the arrest, trial and sentence to rigorous imprisonment of Rev. Father Stanislaus Tigga for an action which was considered by the former Rajah to be a crime. The former Rajah had banned the preaching of Christianity in his kingdom, and the entry of priests into the kingdom was restricted to four times in the year and each visit was limited to 48 hours. Father Tigga's crime was that *after the dissolution of the Princely Order and the integration of the "kingdom" of Udaipur with the Central Provinces & Berar*, he entered Udaipur without permission of authority, and stayed in the territory on these few occasions for more than 48 hours! It was baffling to note that the Rajahs and their kingdoms had gone, but their 'liberal' enactments against Christian missionaries were kept alive by the Congress Government of C.P. & Berar.

Father Tigga went in appeal against the sentence passed on him, after serving a portion of the sentence, and the District and Sessions Judge of Raigarh held that the executive orders restricting the entry of Catholic priests into the territory of Udaipur did not have the force of law, and so quashed the sentence. Matters might have ended here, but confusion became worse confounded when immediately following the judgment of the District and Sessions Judge, it was bruited about that a subordinate authority, the Sub-Divisional Officer of Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division (embracing the former "kingdom" of Udaipur), had clamped Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code on the Sub-Division and thereby achieved the effect of the Rajah's executive orders preventing the entry of Catholic priests into his "kingdom", and the assembly of Catholics for Divine Services.

In the absence of authoritative information on the above development, the writer as the President of the Christian Association and Major A. F. W. da Costa as the General Secretary of the Catholic Union of India sent a joint representation to the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh (then known as C.P. & Berar) on the grievances of the Tribal Christians, one of which was the continuance of the ban on the entry of Catholic priests into the former "kingdom" of Udaipur which was now the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division. This was followed by Major

P. Bernard, M.L.A., giving notice of a starred interpellation in the Legislative Assembly enquiring into the reasons for proclaiming Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. in the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division.

Conference with Chief Minister

Instead of a reply, all three of us were invited to a Conference with the Chief Minister and the Home Minister on the 29th March 1949. At this interview between three of us on the one hand and the Chief Minister, Pandit Shukla, the Chief Secretary and the Secretary of Tribal Affairs on the other, the following two, among other questions, were discussed: (1) Why was Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. applied to the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division alone and to no other Tribal areas, and (2) Why are Catholic priests not allowed to enter the Sub-Division or reside therein although there are about 10,000 Catholics living in the area?

As regards the first question, Pandit Shukla explained that there was trouble brewing in the Tribal areas, and quite recently firing had to be ordered in the Mayurbanj State. Government had information that Communists had penetrated into the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division and were inciting the Tribals. Government also had information that interested political parties were trying to create a corridor from Bengal to Hyderabad through these tribal areas. As this was a state of emergency, Government could not help proclaiming Section 144 to prevent meetings being held in furtherance of Communist designs.

This was the first time that anyone of us had heard of the Tribal areas having become the hot-bed of Communism. I then informed Pandit Shukla that both as a Catholic and a Congressman, I would be happy to help Government in liquidating the Communist menace. I then offered to tour through the Tribal areas of Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division to wean the Catholics from Communist influence. Pandit Shukla accepted my offer.

The next point related to the continuance of the ban on the entry and residence of Catholic priests in the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division. The Chief Minister assured us that there was no ban as such, and he would gladly permit the entry and residence of priests if certain conditions were fulfilled. According to information with Government, these priests were in the habit of meddling in politics, but if the Bishop were to give an

undertaking in writing that they would not do so, he would be prepared to consider their entry and residence.

The Bishop in question was the Right Reverend Dr. O. Sevrin, S.J. (Bishop of Ranchi), and he came post-haste to Nagpur and gave the written assurance that none of his priests had ever meddled in politics, and the undertaking that none of them would ever do so.

No Communist, Dead or Alive

The news of my tour through the Tribal areas had preceded me, and the Sub-Divisional Officer at Dharamjayagarh must have wondered at the effrontery of the man who was going to defy Section 144. Naturally, his eyebrows were officially very high when I called on him, but a surprise was in store for him when I handed over a letter of introduction from the Deputy Commissioner of Raigarh, his immediate superior. Those eyebrows dropped immediately to merge into the contours of a beaming smile and welcome! Business was business, and I asked him for information as to the areas under the influence of, or infested with, Communists. "Communists?" he asked in surprise, not knowing the reason of my visit to the ex-Rajah's former capital. He fumbled. On a note from the Chief Secretary, Mr. Sunderlal Varma, the Deputy Commissioner of Raigarh (whom I knew as a young man at Nagpur) had given me a letter of introduction to the Sub-Divisional Officer that I desired to meet the Catholic Tribals, and facilities should be given for the meeting. A Police Inspector, who was probably there to arrest me, became my escort. Father Tigga who was waiting in the car outside the court came out to accompany me on foot. The first to join us were the groups of what I thought were litigants in the premises of the court, and soon—from here, there, everywhere, including the three-tops—quite a crowd of people formed a procession to the outskirts of the town. I asked the Police Inspector about any Communists in the place. He frankly confessed that he had not even heard of such people or the reason why Section 144 had been promulgated. Looking at my white cap, he added: "But, Sir, an order is an order, and our duty is to carry out these orders."

My search for the Communists throughout the Dharamjayagarh Sub-Division was a wild goose chase. There was no such thing, dead or alive. The people were simple, unsophisticated aboriginals, living from day to day in mortal fright of the authorities whose very shadow was a signal for hiding.

I submitted my Report to the Government of C.P. & Berar which, of course, was not very complimentary to the kind of administration I saw in the Tribal areas, in the hope that the impressions under which Pandit Shukla was labouring would now be corrected.

At this stage, the position was as under:

- (1) That whatever the validity of the Udaipur State Conversion Act, 1946, enacted by the Rajah, which required registration of conversions from one religion to another, even he had not banned the entry and residence of Catholic priests in the former "kingdom". The ban was imposed under executive instructions which, the District and Sessions Judge at Rajgarh held, did not have the force of law.
- (2) That the local authorities desired a continuance of the anti-Christian conditions created by the Rajah, and so misguided Pandit Shukla into thinking that Communists had penetrated into the integrated Tribal areas in order to proclaim Section 144 and thus prevent not only the entry of Catholic priests but also the assembly of Catholics for worship.
- (3) That this spirit of identification with the Rajah's administration explained all the reports of discrimination and harassment of Christians in the Tribal areas, and that instead of secularism outmoding theocratic traditions, it was itself getting theocratised.

I had suggested in my Report to Government that an easy and effective solution of the larger problem could be brought about by posting in these areas a few Christian administrative officers, and we looked forward to the solution of the immediate problem at the hands of the Chief Minister himself, as the bogey of Communism was proved to be illusory, and the undertaking required by him was given by the Bishop of Ranchi.

Conversion Movement

The Catholic Regional Council undertook a thorough study of the legal and actual position obtaining in the Tribal areas. It was found that in the "kingdom" of Jashpur about 70,000 Oraons (name of the tribe) had already become Christians since about 1910, that in the "kingdom" of Udaipur there were about 10,000 of them and in the "kingdoms" of Sarguja and Raigarh the Catholic population was just a hand-

ful. In all these "kingdoms" the Oraon tribe is the overwhelming part of the population. The conversion movement in Chota Nagpur was essentially a tribal movement which took in its sweep three main tribes—the Oraon, the Munda and the Kharia who were groaning under the economic exploitation and processes of expropriation practised by the non-tribals who, in the wake of the British revenue system, had entered these areas. Whatever the motives of conversion, the influence of the Oraons in the parts adjoining Jashpur was the reason for the rapid conversion movement in Jashpur. A curious feature of this movement was that the Catholic missionaries themselves did not enter Jashpur, but the Oraons went up in deputation after deputation and importuned them to come to Jashpur and baptise them. As one-third of the population of Jashpur had become Christians, and they were provided with educational facilities in about a hundred schools, they outgrew the old slave mentality to a dim consciousness of their dignity as human beings.

As the autocratic sovereignty of the Rajahs depended entirely on such slave mentality, the Jashpur phenomenon frightened the neighbouring Rajahs. Raigarh which had the least number of Christians was the first to enact the *Raigarh State Conversion Act* in 1936, and the reasons trotted out in the Preamble was that "some recent conversions have fanned communal flames in the State to such an undesirable extent that serious communal friction might break out at any time". Of course, the Rajah or his Durbar was under no compulsion to disclose the nature of the "communal fires" or where they had broken out or what destruction they had caused. Sarguja followed suit in 1945 by enacting the *Sarguja State Hindu Apostacy Act, 1945*, which gave no reason for the enactment but described all aboriginals as belonging to the Hindu faith and identified *Alien Faith* with Christianity and Islam. The right of allowing conversion from Hindu religion to an alien faith was vested in the Durbar. The last State to follow this double lead was Udaipur with the *Udaipur State Conversion Act, 1946*. The Preamble to this Act admits that "a fair number of aboriginals have changed their religion", and then it is stated that "such conversions are creating an atmosphere which might disturb the public peace", and so the Act which requires conversions to be registered, was brought into force.

The common object of these three Acts was clearly to prevent the growth and spread of Christianity among the Oraons. In this attempt, the Rajahs had the active support of the

British Government. This was demonstrated when on the plea of the Rajah's minority in Udaipur, the Agent to the Governor-General banned the preaching of Christianity in the State and went to the extent of characterising the small loans given to the farmers in times of famine as "inducements" for conversion. The study was instructive as it revealed that in the remote tribal areas where Christianity had taken a foot-hold, secularism had succumbed to the forces of reaction and therefore false reports and explanations had to be given.

The Jarkhand Excuse

Did Pandit Shukla redeem his promise to allow a Catholic priest to reside in Dharamjayagarh? The Catholic Regional Council passed at least four resolutions reiterating the prayer and the writer was granted at least half a dozen interviews with him. At first, the excuse was "priests meddling in politics". Now it was Jarkhand!

I had anticipated the objection and had already set in force a movement for *mass conversion to the Congress*. Thousands of Catholic Tribals eagerly sought admission. Thousands of rupees had been collected for Congress funds. It is a shocking story how these Catholic Tribals were treated by the local Congress tin-gods for fear that the Tahsil Congress Committee would be captured by them, and what happened to the money. It is a tribute to the sterling stuff of which these Tribals are made that while the Jarkhand Party captured cent per cent seats in the 1951 General Elections in the Bihar Assembly, that Party could not capture a single seat for the Madhya Pradesh Assembly. Even in the Janpad Sabha elections, Jarkhand was nowhere in the picture!

The officials knew the weak spots of Pandit Shukla's heart and kept him fed with all sorts of stories about Christians. When the Jarkhand story failed, the Pandit came out with another. "I admit," he said, "that the Bishop has given a satisfactory undertaking, and I have no reason to think that he will not be true to his promise. But," he added, "you see that he is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Government of Bihar, and as such, I have no hold over him. Unless the Bishop giving the undertaking is under my jurisdiction, I cannot hold him to his word."

The sands of time were fast running out. The tribals of Dharamjayagarh and the Catholic Regional Council were both getting fed up. The grievances of the Jashpur Catholics, far

from being redressed, were being aggravated. Not one of the hundred Catholics Schools was considered fit for recognition or aid. On the contrary, the most sinister attempt was made to throttle all of them out of existence, by starting rival schools in the neighbourhood. It is in this context that the Constitution was promulgated.

The Catholic Regional Council which met, took stock of the situation. In view of the Fundamental Rights guaranteed to all citizens, it was decided to request the Bishop of Ranchi to send one of his priests to take up residence in the forbidden land of Dharamjayagarh without any permission of anyone. These bold tactics paid. No one opposed his entry. No one prevented his stay. The Catholic Tribals hailed their pastor—and he was none other than Father Tigga!

Campaign of Terrorism

Resentment over the triumph of Fundamental Rights went underground. The authorities were piqued. Anti-Christian hostility assumed a different form.

Boko Sardar, a kinsman of the Rajah of Jashpur, spear-headed the campaign of terrorism and vituperation. A certain Swami Ramanuj Saraswati addressed himself to the task of uprooting Missionaries from the tribal areas and wiping out all traces of Christianity. The legal brain behind the agitation belonged to Mr. R. K. Deshpande who has figured prominently in the Niyogi Report. What has not been mentioned therein is the fact that this R. K. Deshpande, as a Government servant in the Tribal Welfare Department, headed a procession on the 11th October 1948, shouting "Quit India" slogans and invaded the Church (now Cathedral) of Ginabahar. When the matter was discussed with Pandit Shukla on the 29th March 1949, the Chief Minister gave a categorical assurance that such things would not happen again. Of course, it did not suit the Niyogi Report to refer to these facts. Boko Sardar's campaign went right inside the Church of Tangargaon which he desecrated by urinating therein, and into the Church of Simirdih in which he held Kirtan. The Swami's tactics consisted in taking the "Thepa" (thumb-impressions) of thousands of tribals under Boko's intimidation or other pressure to some kind of written statements. This was followed by the "Rice-in-the-Fire" ceremony and a clean shave of the head with a tuft left intact and the declaration that "Now you have become Hindus". It later transpired that the hand-written or typewritten statements to

which the thepa was forced under third-degree pressure was a recantation of Christianity by the Tribals or contained aspersions on the missionaries, or the story of how they were forced into becoming Christians. The gallant "Swami" collected these statements and presented the formidable "evidence" first to Pandit Shukla and then went up to Delhi to show it to Pandit Nehru. This was an intricate trick of wheels within wheels in which the Tribal Catholics were caught—the outer official wheel, the inner Sardar wheel and the innermost Swami wheel. This was in Jashpur.

Out in Sarguja, the problem was not one of dealing with existing Christians, but of preventing missionaries from coming in. The most effective way of doing this was to inflame public opinion against Christian missionaries so that they might land in summer heat if they landed at all. The author of the *Hindu Apostasy Act*, the Maharaja of Sarguja himself, led the attack. Anti-missionary propaganda was let loose in the Sarguja district. Among the printed leaflets broadcast in the district was one signed among others by the ex-Maharaja describing missionaries as the authors of the Atom Bomb which destroyed Hiroshima and charging the Christians with political designs for the creation of a separate province as they had done in Travancore-Cochin. This was one of the pamphlets sent to Pandit Nehru by the late Mr. P. K. Salve, an eminent Congressman, and Mr. P. Lobo to illustrate the anti-Christian and anti-missionary conditions which prevailed in the newly merged States.

Pandit Nehru could not perhaps believe his eyes, and so he sent the representation made by Messrs. Salve and Lobo together with the incendiary leaflet to Pandit Shukla for a full and detailed report of the actual conditions prevailing in these areas.

Hereby hangs the story of the genesis of the Niyogi Enquiry Committee.

The Genesis of the Committee

The Deputy Commissioners of Raigarh and Sarguja appear to have been ordered to submit reports about the activities of Christian missionaries in their two districts, and both of them found themselves at sea to draw up factual reports. Consequently, the Deputy Commissioner of Raigarh drew upon his imagination to compose a "Report", and the Deputy Commissioner of Sarguja fell to writing the history of Christianity in Jashpur which is outside his jurisdiction. The Raigarh Report

strung up some "incidents" of which no one in Raigarh district was aware and over which Government itself took no action, and concluded by saying that Christians had joined hands with Muslims to abduct Hindu girls, with a view to conversions! The Sarguja Report concluded with the words: "If the activities of Missionaries are allowed to be carried on in the manner in which they are at present, there is every possibility of a disorder taking place."

Readers who have followed the judicial proceedings in the Mandamus case against the Niyogi Committee in the Nagpur High Court will recall that in the Return filed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh in reply to the Writ Petition, the submission of such reports to the Central Government has been denied. The denial is absurd when I have dealt with the allegations contained in these "Reports" in my Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India dated 14th February 1954, which was demi-officially sent through Pandit Shukla under the Catholic Regional Council's No. 82/54/CRC dated 14th February 1954. The High Court has, in its discretion, left this all-important matter severely alone, although it is the turning point in this case. Government had to deny the submission of these false reports for reasons which I will presently unfold. Meanwhile, I take the full responsibility to repeat that the Government of Madhya Pradesh did submit to the Central Government baseless and alarmist reports about the activities of Christian Tribals and Christian missionaries in the districts of Raigarh and Sarguja. I proceed now to disclose the contents of these "Reports".

RAIGARH REPORT

"Patwari Training Schools have been set up in a few mission centres, the idea being to get as many Christians admitted in the cadre of Patwaris as possible."

So it has become a crime for the Tribals to get trained and qualified for the posts of Patwaris! No wonder these authorities frown even on educational institutions for Tribals. All concerned will note with dismay the difference between the "directive principles" of the Constitution which contain all sorts of good intentions for the uplift of the Tribals, and the actual practice as revealed in this paragraph.

Unfortunately for the Government of Madhya Pradesh, these Training Schools were not started by the Missionaries.

The organisers were the Bharat Survey Training School, and all that the Mission did was to provide accommodation.

(2) "A Christian postmaster disclosed the contents of a letter to Father Torfa."

Utterly false and mischievous statement.

(3) "Christians have joined hands with Muslims in abducting Hindu girls with a view to converting them either as Christians or Muslims."

Readers will note how the blood of Hindus will boil on reading of such activities on the part of Christians. They will also note the time when these statements were made, i.e. soon after the blood-bath through which Partition was established.

The fact is that neither on the police records of the Rajahs who were ruling these States before, nor on those of the Congress administration, nor in any court of law is there a single case of the kind! The whole statement in the Report is a malicious invention against the Christians of this area.

(4) "Religious instruction is compulsory for all children (in Catholic schools) although this will always be denied by the missionaries."

If a statement is denied, even a tyro on the lower rungs of the administrative ladder will rely on proofs in support of his statement, but the writer of the Report appears to have been in a hurry to collect any mud to fling at these missionaries. Catholics, the world over, are aware that no Catholic school makes religious instruction compulsory for non-Catholics, and so do non-Christians by the million who have attended Catholic schools.

(5) "In a missionary school (not named) the picture of Mahatma Gandhi was lying in the rubbish while that of Christ was displayed prominently."

It makes an exacting demand on one's credulity to think that a district officer or a School Inspector went round to examine the school's rubbish! There is a strain of lunacy in the headmaster of that school if he spent money to purchase a picture of Gandhiji merely for the satisfaction of keeping it in the rubbish! Of course, that school must remain unnamed, because that is the kind of proof on which these reporters rely!

(6) "Under some excuse or another, boys of the Mission schools are prevented from participating in district sports. . . ."

This is the only charge which has some basis in fact. For some years, the only Mission School which could participate in the district sports was the Ginabazar School (now Loyola High School), but it used to be *prevented* from participation

by the tactics of the district officers who sent intimation of these sports-fixtures *after the event*! In the very year in which this Report was written, when the invitation came in time, did not these very "Mission" boys carry away most of the trophies?

(7) They have also been prevented "from participating in Hindu festivals".

Any comment on the expectations of a district officer of a secular State that Christians should participate in Hindu festivals or vice versa, would be an insult to the intelligence of readers.

(8) "Even on days like the 15 August and 26 January some Christian celebrations are staged in order to divert the students' attention from these national events."

Catholics all over the world have for centuries been celebrating the Feast of the Assumption on the 15th August. Since Independence, special thanksgiving prayers are offered for the grace and gift of Freedom and for the prosperity of the nation. These prayers which are conducted in the mornings have not prevented Catholics from attending other national celebrations. The complaint which gave rise to the Niyogi Committee must have sounded ironic to Dr. Niyogi himself because on the 15th August 1955 I was with the Niyogi Committee at Khandwa, and after Mass all the boys were marched to the school premises to salute the National Flag. This was another Tribal area and the boys were mostly Balahis, and I took the salute.

The story of Christian celebrations on the 26th January is pure phantasy, for there is no Christian festival on that date.

(9) "It is reported that the Lord Bishop of Ranchi has now shifted to Jashpur. . . . This is obviously to extend their zone of influence which so far was limited to Jashpur and Dharamjayagarh tahsils."

What seemed so "obvious" to the Reporter could not have been obvious to the Chief Minister, Pandit R. S. Shukla, because the bifurcation of the diocese of Ranchi did not precede but actually followed his suggestion to bring the Bishop who gave the undertaking on behalf of his priests, under the administrative jurisdiction of Madhya Pradesh!

SARGUJA REPORT

There are only two specific allegations in this Report, but the Report itself is much longer than the Raigarh Report and contains a long story about the rise and development of Christianity in Jashpur with which Sarguja as a separate dis-

trict, and previously as a separate "kingdom" has nothing to do. This Report contains all sorts of aspersions, insinuations and innuendoes against Christian missionaries, and an attempt is made to show that if missionaries are permitted to carry on their work, the whole population of Sarguja will pounce upon them and lynch them. The following are the two cases of Christian missionaries mentioned:

(1) That Rev. J. C. Christie was being rightly prosecuted under the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act for breach of Food Control Regulations, but Messrs. Salve and Lobo have distorted the case in their presentation to the Prime Minister as a case of persecution.

After protracted judicial proceedings, Rev. J. C. Christie has been completely acquitted. It is after the acquittal that the Niyogi Report has tried to make out that he was "detected found smuggling rice to Bihar". More than two full pages of printed matter are devoted to a description of this case "in some detail". In a statement published in 1956, the National Christian Council says: "The fact that on appeal, Mr. Christie and his associates were acquitted by the Appellate Court in Ambikapur, which characterised the sentence passed on them earlier, as cruel, is not mentioned. That a Committee whose report was submitted *after the result of the appeal was known*, should choose to refer to accusations which had been found by a superior court to be false and to sentences which had been reversed, is gravely to be regretted, especially when the Chairman of the Committee was a person familiar with judicial ways."

(2) The second case mentioned in the Report is that of Mr. K. C. Burdett, Secretary, British Churches of Christ Mission, who is reported as having sung some songs which were very offensive to the feelings of Hindus. Thereupon, the Police authorities appeared to have made investigations, and it is stated that Mr. Burdett tendered a written apology. The Report further says that "matter ended" there.

The case has not been recorded on the files of the Catholic Regional Council, but one has the uncomfortable feeling that where Christian missionaries are concerned, matters only begin when they are officially declared as having "ended". If Mr. Burdett had tendered an apology, where was the need to ex-hume a case that was buried?

Anyway, on the basis of the above two cases, in which one was acquitted honourably and the other had tendered an apology, the Sarguja Report arrives at the following conclusions:

- (1) "That the Adivasis are an unsophisticated lot, and it would hardly be fair to leave them at the mercy of Christian propagandists."
- (2) "The Adivasis need some protection against the manipulations of persons whose real aim the Adivasis may not easily be able to foresee."
- (3) "The situation in this area has gradually developed to what one may call explosive, and if the activities of missionaries are allowed to be carried on in the manner they are at present, there is every possibility of a disorder taking place."

Whether the premises warrant the conclusion or the finding that the situation is "explosive" and "*there is every possibility of a disorder taking place*", can very well be decided by any man with a modicum of common sense. Here is an administrative officer solemnly writing in an official Report that because Christianity has developed in Jashpur, therefore the situation in Sarguja has become explosive! The object of such unwarranted and inflammatory "report" should be obvious to everyone, but it had its effect.

No one in the world knew that the Government of Madhya Pradesh had sent such unfounded reports about the Christian Tribals and Christian missionaries to the Central Government. But a certain Mr. Jangde, Member of Parliament, apparently with inside knowledge of the nature of these Raigarh and Sarguja Reports, and intending to discomfit the Christian missionaries, egged Dr. K. N. Katju to reveal on the floor of Parliament, whether he had received such reports and what he proposed to do about them. That was on the 21 April 1953.

Believing these reports to be true, Dr. Katju in all sincerity admitted the receipt of these Reports. This is the famous statement which gave rise to a whole year of acute controversy all over India with repercussions abroad, and ultimately led to the appointment of the Niyogi Enquiry Committee. This is printed as Appendix 2 which may kindly be read before entering into the facts and arguments recounted below.

Spate of Prosecutions

While Dr. Katju's statement let loose a fierce all-India controversy both in the press and on the platform, the tribal areas of Raigarh and Sarguja experienced the horrors of acute anti-missionary activities. Top-ranking officials who usually do

not stir out of their headquarters, suddenly projected long tours in the interior of the districts and evinced keen interest in "converts" old and new, and "the motives of the conversion". What the process entails to the victims who are generally marshalled by the lower officials, may well be imagined.

This was followed by a spate of prosecutions started by the Police against Missionaries, Catechists and other Tribal Catholics. Fr. Bulckens, the Superior of the Jashpur Mission, had the honour of heading the list, having been charged with kidnapping a young man and keeping him in forcible detention with a view to his conversion. After long proceedings and after fluctuating fortunes in the lower courts, Fr. Bulckens and all the other accused were honourably acquitted by the District and Sessions Judge, Raigarh, on 21 January 1956. Fr. H. Cardinales was the next on the list, and only recently, the High Court of Jabalpure quashed the proceedings and the sentence passed on him and ordered a complete retrial of the case on the ground that the Magistrate who tried him had no jurisdiction to try him for the sections under which he was charged. He was charged with threatening to murder a Hindu if he did not become a Catholic! The other cases are those of Fr. L. Berge, Fr. Van Boxtel and several others about which I cannot write as they are at some stage of appeal.

The most sensational development was the startling discoveries which the gallant Swami Ramanuj Saraswati disclosed at a full-dress Press Conference at Nagpur and published through handbills and leaflets all over Jashpur that the Mission Stations in Jashpur had become secret arsenals and that truck-loads of arms and ammunition were transported from Raigarh and buried underground in these Mission Stations with a view to an armed uprising against the State—directed, of course, by the missionaries. Seeing the tempo of the persecution in which all the anti-missionary forces had joined hands, I was at one stage afraid that flesh and blood might yield to the combined pressure. It is a tribute to the sterling qualities of leadership manifested by the Jesuit Fathers, both Tribal and foreign, and the still greater qualities of endurance of the children of the jungles, that they met the onslaught like men made of steel.

Acute Resentment

Meanwhile, the Madhya Pradesh press carried from Pachmarhi, the summer headquarters of Government, an inspired news item that in accordance with the statement made by

Dr. Katju in Parliament, a 3-man Enquiry Committee consisting of Dr. Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, Seth Govind Das and Shri Ganshyamsing Gupta had been appointed to probe into missionary activities.

This created acute resentment and disappointment among the Christians of Madhya Pradesh, who felt that in a matter in which there were allegations and counter-allegations, the Enquiry Committee should have representatives of both parties, or else the enquiry should be entrusted to an entirely neutral party. Among the protests sent to Government was a joint one by the Catholic and Anglican bishops of Nagpur.

While speculation was rife as to the composition of the Enquiry Committee and the terms of reference, there was no official notification in the Gazette. When the writer approached the Chief Secretary, he confessed complete ignorance of the appointment of any Committee by the Government. All the representations made by the Catholic Regional Council remained unanswered. The first hint came on the 10 January 1954, when in reply to Press correspondents at Raipur, Pandit Shukla said that an Enquiry Committee would soon be appointed by Government to probe into missionary activities.

At long last, the appointment was duly notified. Christians in Madhya Pradesh were deeply agitated over the following features of the Committee:

- (1) It was not clear from the Notification whether the Committee was constituted under the Commissions of Inquiry Act or was a purely executive appointment.
- (2) Notwithstanding the rumour of the appointment of Dr. Niyogi as Chairman of the 3-man Enquiry Committee, which the official notification merely confirmed, he had come out with an unrestricted outburst against Christian missionaries on the very eve of his appointment. It was a foregone conclusion how such a man would conduct the enquiry.
- (3) The appointment of Ganshyamsingh Gupta, Arya-samajist of all-India fame (as admitted by Government in the Nagpur High Court), and a bitter anti-Christian, carried its own eloquent commentary.
- (4) The selection of S. K. George, perhaps the only "Christian" in India who denied the divinity of Christ and who is opposed to Christian missionary evangelisation, laid to rest all doubts as to the character of the Committee and the tendency of the enquiry.

- (5) The question arose in the minds of Christians: If the Government wished to be fair and impartial, why did it not include in the Committee some responsible and representative Christians?
- (6) Christians having been subjected to all sorts of administrative discrimination and harassment, they were naturally the people who had sent numerous representations to Government to protect them. In the terms of reference given to the Niyogi Committee, there was not one word to direct the Committee to enquire into the complaints of discrimination and harassment.
- (7) On the contrary, for the first time it was announced that "Government had received representations from time to time that Christian missionaries, by force, fraud or other monetary temptations are converting illiterate aborigines, etc.". No one had heard of such representations having been made to Government whether by individuals or organisations.

There was nothing that the Christians could do. They were faced with the alternative of submitting themselves to an obviously partial, one-sided and anti-Christian tribunal or allow the case to go by default. It was at this stage that the Catholic Regional Council authorised the President (the writer) to seek the Prime Minister's intervention.

Decision to Co-operate

I met the Prime Minister on the 12 May 1954. I am releasing for publication my interview with him which was recorded on the same day in New Delhi even before I communicated it to the Christian M.P.s in the capital. The whole report as now released was immediately communicated to all the Catholic Bishops of India. The C.B.C.I.'s Standing Committee thereafter met in Bangalore to consider the report of the interview. The interview is appended as Appendix 3.

As advised by the Prime Minister, the Catholic Regional Council decided to co-operate with the Niyogi Committee. In pursuance of this desire, I addressed a letter to the Secretary of the Enquiry Committee requesting him to make available for my inspection all the representations said to have been received by Government against the methods of conversions followed by missionaries. He asked me to go over to the Secretariat on the 1st June 1954. As I was there, Dr. Niyogi also came over. All

the files were handed over to me, and I took down notes of each and every letter on these files. I discovered that all the letters had been in reply to the Committee's request for information about missionary methods of conversion. The Committee was constituted on the 14 April 1954 and it issued its appeal for information 2 or 3 days later. These files contained the replies. *There was not a single letter or representation dated prior to the constitution of the Committee which the Government of Madhya Pradesh is said to have "received from time to time"!*

The question which stared the Catholic Regional Council in the face was this: "What was the Enquiry Committee going to enquire into?"

All the same, the Prime Minister's advice weighed heavily on the Council, and the Council decided to extend its full co-operation to the Niyogi Committee.

At the very first meeting of the Enquiry Committee at Dharamjayagarh on 6 June 1954, I noticed six men facing the audience, and one of the six wore the gerua garb of a Sadhu. Dr. Niyogi introduced the members one by one. When he came to the saffron-robed gentleman, he said that "this is an Arya Samajist Swamiji" who is accompanying the Committee. A cold shiver ran down the spine of the two observers of the Catholic Regional Council.

Throughout the year, the Regional Council extended its full co-operation to the Enquiry Committee. In many places, the Mission stations entertained the Committee to lunch or tea or dinner. Hopes of justice still prevailed over alternating fears.

The first tour was conducted in the districts of Raigarh and Sarguja where Catholic missionaries were at work. The second tour was in the districts of Raipur and Bilaspur where Protestant missionaries (mostly American) were working. The difference between the workings of the two denominations was reflected in Mr. Ganshvamsingh Gupta's shrewd observation made to Dr. Niyogi, which I overheard: "In that Jesuit zone, there is no evidence of foreign money coming in, and yet there are thousands of conversions. In this American zone, the inflow of money is by lakhs and it is admitted by these missionaries, but there is no evidence of conversions. What could be the explanation?" After some reflection, Dr. Niyogi said: "There are instances in the history of Missions where there are secret understandings as regards different denominational zones of operation."

The Questionnaire

Upto the time of the publication of the Questionnaire, Catholic co-operation continued. The Questionnaire at once revealed the *modus operandi* of the Enquiry Committee and the mind of the members. It was clear to our mind that (1) the Enquiry Committee had no specific allegation against Missionaries to enquire into, that (2) therefore they were out to collect fresh evidence against missionaries, and (3) in doing so, they had not only prejudged the issues but had travelled beyond the terms of reference given to them.

I had pointed out to the Prime Minister that while no one seemed to be aware of "representations" made to Government against missionary methods of conversions, the Christian Tribals had definitely and from time to time made representations about discrimination and harassment, but the terms of reference did not cover any enquiry into these matters. He promised to write to Pandit Shukla to request him to widen the terms of reference. I have already published the correspondence on this subject in ENQUIRY in which the Government of Madhya Pradesh declined to widen the terms of reference as suggested by the Prime Minister.

It was now evident that the Niyogi Committee was not set about any enquiry but to collect as much evidence as they could against Christians and Christian missionaries and most certainly to by-pass all the allegations contained in the Raigarh and Sarguja Reports. In the circumstances, there was no alternative but to withhold co-operation.

A last-minute attempt was made by His Grace the Archbishop of Nagpur when a meeting was arranged with Dr. Niyogi and some members of the Council to bridge the widening gulf between the Council and the Committee over the Questionnaire. His Grace pointed out that the insinuations in the Questionnaire were most unfair to the Christians and suggested a fairer and more balanced approach to the problem. Dr. Niyogi, however, could not see his way to agree.

At a meeting of some Catholic and Protestant representatives of Nagpur at the Archbishop's House, the question was discussed as to what should be done. The Catholic Regional Council's point of view was that all negotiations having failed, the only way of checking the rising tempo of anti-Christian feelings in the State, largely fostered by the operations of the Niyogi Committee, was to restrain its proceedings in a Court of Law. This was agreed to.

On 26 April 1955, the President of the Catholic Regional Council served a legal notice on the Government of Madhya Pradesh for the immediate dissolution of the Niyogi Committee on various grounds of law, lack of procedure, irregular and unjust proceedings, etc. A full-dress meeting of the Council held in Ranchi formally sanctioned the action proposed and on the 8 July 1955, the Writ Petition was filed in the High Court of Judicature at Nagpur under Article 226 of the Constitution of India.

Peculiar Features

This picture of the background of the Niyogi Committee will focus attention on the following peculiar features and conditions which prevailed in Madhya Pradesh and gave rise to developments which ultimately resulted in the appointment of this Committee:

- (1) The old Rajahs in certain tribal areas of C.P. & Berar had enacted laws to prevent the spread of Christianity in their respective "kingdoms".
- (2) When these "kingdoms" were integrated, the civil administrators who were sent there by the Provincial Government to modernise the administration, successfully introduced every other kind of reform except that of secularising the "kingdom" from their old theocratic mould. The reason for this no doubt lies in the sympathy of the civil officers with the anti-Christian laws enacted by the Rajahs, due to their religious affiliation.
- (3) Consequently, all the anti-Christian laws of the Rajahs were bodily transferred to the Statute Books of the Government of C.P. & Berar, and still continue to be there.
- (4) Local official attitude towards Christians was one of bitter hostility. Harassment of Christians and discrimination against them followed. No Catholic priest was allowed to enter the forbidden land of Dharamjaya-garh from the time of integration of the State right up to the time of the promulgation of the Constitution when the priest entered in exercise of his fundamental rights.
- (5) When Christian Tribals and their representatives sent frantic appeals for protection against persecution to authorities beyond the frontiers of Madhya Pradesh,

the officials, in sheer self-defence, had to send in all sorts of reports against Christians and Christian missionaries. At first, they tried to make out that Christianity was denationalising them. Then, in order to prevent the entry of Catholic priests to minister to their flock, they trotted out the excuse of Communists having penetrated into the area. Then, they raised the bogey of Jarkhand. Finally when the Central Government wanted to know the actual position, they sent those blatant Raigarh and Sarguja Reports to prejudice the Central Government against Christian Tribals and Catholic missionaries.

- (6) The Central Government was completely misled by these false reports. In fact, Dr. Katju's statement in Parliament was largely based on the Sarguja Report.
- (7) There is a family resemblance between the methods adopted in Madhya Pradesh and those of Communist China. They made someone else make a statement in Parliament and then when a fierce controversy ensued, they came forward to say: "Alright, we shall appoint an Enquiry Committee to find out what the facts are."
- (8) The Government tried to justify the proposed Enquiry by publishing for world information that "they had received representations from time to time" about fraudulent missionary activities, but did not make available these "representations" either to the Committee or to the public.
- (9) In appointing the Enquiry Committee, they made sure that the members would produce the kind of report that was actually produced, which would substantiate the kind of allegations made in the Raigarh and Sarguja Reports.

In the circumstances, the six members who formed the Committee did nothing but collect all sorts of miscellaneous gossip about Christians, missionaries, their private, public, political, humanitarian, social and every kind of activity. To give it a show of learning, they went up to some libraries and made extracts from some 80 books to which they gave their own interpretations. These extracts were intended to illustrate the so-called findings of the Committee.

This is the background and the substance of what is commonly known as the Niyogi Report.

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTION APPOINTING THE COMMITTEE

(Rajnithik thatha Sena Vibagh)
(Political & Military Dept.)
Nagpur, 14th April 1954.

No. 318-716-V-Con.—Whereas representations have been made to Government from time to time that Christian missionaries, either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary, and other gain, convert illiterate aboriginals and other backward people, thereby offending the feelings of non-Christians;

And whereas it has further been represented that the Missions are utilised directly or indirectly for purposes of political or extra-religious objectives;

And whereas the Christian missionaries have repudiated these allegations and have asserted on the other hand that their activities are confined solely to religious propaganda, and towards social, medical and educational work;

And whereas the missionaries have further alleged that they are being harassed by non-Christian people and local officials;

And as agitation is growing on either side;

The State Government consider it desirable in the public interest to have a thorough enquiry made into the whole question through an impartial Committee.

Government are accordingly pleased to constitute a Committee consisting of the following:

Chairman

- (1) Dr. Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, M.A., LL.M., LL.D., ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, Madhya Pradesh, and Retired Chief Justice, High Court of Judicature at Nagpur.

Members

- (2) Shri Ganshyam Singh Gupta, B.Sc., LL.B., ex-Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly,
 - (3) Shri Seth Govind Das, M.P., Jabalpur,
 - (4) Shri Kirtimant Rao, B.A., M.L.A., Ahiri, Tahsil Sironcha, District Chanda,
 - (5) Shri S. K. George, M.A., B.D., Professor, Commerce College, Wardha,
 - (6) Shri B. P. Phatak, Secretary to Government, Madhya Pradesh, Public Health Department.
- Shri B. P. Phatak will act as Secretary to the Committee.

The Committee shall enquire into the questions mentioned in the Preamble and report to Government what the facts are. On a thorough review of the question from historical and other points of view, the Committee may also make recommendations to Government as to the action that Government should take to deal with the situation as disclosed by the enquiry.

The Committee is authorised to frame its own procedure for conducting the enquiry and is requested to submit its report to Government with all possible expedition.

By Order of the Governor
B. N. KUNTE
Secretary

APPENDIX 2

DR. KATJU'S STATEMENT IN LOK SABHA

New Delhi, April 22, 1953.

Dr. Kailasnath Katju, Home Minister, said yesterday that it had been made clear to all foreign missionaries working in the country that if they were engaged in social welfare work, medical work and education, they were welcome, but if they indulged in proselytisation, it would be undesirable. That was the basic rule governing the Government's attitude.

Dr. Katju was replying in the House of the People to Mr. Jangde who wanted to know if the Government had received any complaints from the Madhya Pradesh Government or the local population that in many places in Sarguja and Bilaspur districts of Chattisgarh, Adivasis were given monetary temptations, sometimes threatened, and then converted to Christianity, and that the temples of the Adivasis were being turned into Churches.

Dr. Katju said that certain reports containing allegations to the effect that foreign missionaries working in the Sarguja and Raigarh districts of Madhya Pradesh were engaged in proselytising activities which offended the feelings of the non-Christian local population. These reports, however, made no mention of any instances of turning temples into churches.

Government were taking necessary steps to check objectionable missionary activities where they existed. It was, however, not in the public interest to divulge the details.

Dr. Katju said that first reports of such activities were received six months ago. He could not at present say about the

number of conversions. Enquiry was being made and the matter was under consideration. The House should not press him too far in the matter for further information.—P.T.I.

APPENDIX 3

MR. FRANCIS'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

Mr. G. X. Francis meets Prime Minister Nehru in Parliament House on May 12, 1954.

The following is a transcript of notes taken by Mr. Francis on the occasion. Mr. Francis began:

"Sir, I have come in connection with the Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh and I have to submit that the reason for appointing it appears to be that missionary activities are offending the feelings of non-Christian people. That assumption conceals a doctrine which is bound to be detrimental to the interests of religious minorities who believe in propagating their faith. I submit, Sir, that rights are rights, and cannot be subordinated to the "feelings" of certain people. When there is a clash between my right and the feelings of my neighbours, I must expect the State to protect my rights and control the feelings of my neighbour.

"If missionaries have used force or fraud, they should be dealt with under the ordinary provisions of the Law. The appointment of an Enquiry Committee to probe into what is otherwise the exercise of a fundamental right, carries with it the suggestion that the ordinary processes of the Law have been tried and they have failed to check the practice of force or fraud. May I submit, Sir, that this assumption is also wrong? No missionary has been hauled up in a court of law to stand trial for use of force or fraud. No court has delivered a judgment in a single case.

"Has there been any outburst of lawlessness as the result of missionary activities in the districts of Raigarh or Sarguja? Sir, I am in intimate touch with these areas, and I could assure you that these tribal people are living in the most peaceful manner possible. There are no mass conversions, there has been no breach of law and order—in fact there has been absolutely nothing to justify the adoption of such an extraordinary measure like an Enquiry Committee.

Christians have reasons to fear that the real reason for the appointment of this Enquiry Committee has not been brought to your notice. The agitation against missionaries has been mainly fostered by the ex-Rajahs of Sarguja and the integrated States, because they had banned Christianity, and now the Con-

stitution has outlawed their laws. When the Rajahs were in power, Christians were practising their faith in fear and trembling, in hide-outs and in secret. Now they are doing so openly. There were about 12,000 Christians in all these States in this condition. Now they have come out in the open, and go to Church without any fear. It is this which has offended the feelings of the Rajahs.

"Christians appeal to you, Sir, to protect their rights from the outburst of fanaticism of these Rajahs. Our grievance is that the Government of Madhya Pradesh has joined hands with these Rajahs.

"My second point is that the Committee constituted by the Government of Madhya Pradesh is not a Commission within the meaning of the Commissions of Inquiry Act. It may be anything, but it is not an Enquiry Commission."

NEHRU: "How will a Commission help you any more than a Committee?"

FRANCIS: "Sir, with a Commission we know where we are; we know its powers, its jurisdiction, the right we shall have to cross-examine witnesses and to call for evidence lying hidden in Government records. In fact, before I left Nagpur, I had written to the Committee's Secretary to enquire about the powers and jurisdiction of the Committee. Only today, our legal adviser, Mr. Lobo of the Supreme Court, has sent me the reply to this simple question. The Secretary says that my questions have been referred to the Government for a reply. That really means that even the Committee does not know its own functions as yet. How can we be expected to have confidence in a Committee so haphazardly constituted?"

"But there are other reasons for our lack of confidence. In the 6-man Committee, there are five belonging to the complainant party. The only Christian who is there, happens to be an altogether unknown figure in Madhya Pradesh. In fact, it is only from Government's press note issued 3 days ago, we came to know that Mr. S. K. George is a 'devout Christian and belongs to the Syrian Church'. You, Sir, can appreciate how Christians would feel when they have to depend on Government to give them the credentials of their own representative.

"If Government is anxious to know the truth behind missionary activities, why does it not entrust the enquiry to an impartial body of men with judicial experience? There is no dearth of such men in our country. We, Sir, have all along welcomed an enquiry by Muslim and Parsi judges. An enquiry by such a body will give you the truth, and not the one-sided story which the present irregular Committee is bound to come out with.

"Yes, Sir, we are very sceptical about the findings of this Committee, as we feel that Government is anxious to damn

the missionaries, and has therefore set up a Committee which will dance to its tune. I appeal to your sense of justice to reconstitute the Committee with eminent men of all-India fame who are neither Christians nor Hindus, like Muslims and Parsis, or in the alternative, give parity of representation to Christians. I feel sure that you will concede that our request is fair."

"My last point is that the Tribal Christians of Madhya Pradesh are the aggrieved party. It is they who have been the victims of organised harassments, persecutions and all sorts of discrimination, merely because they are Christians. I have listed these in my memorandum to you dated 14th February 1954. I dare not recapitulate the long story of their sufferings. All that I must say is that no minority has ever suffered for its religion as the Tribal Christians have been suffering in my State. I can only cite three glaring instances which cannot be refuted.

"(1) Have you ever heard of Government attempting to stifle and suppress a hundred schools in a single Tehsil, merely because it is conducted by a minority? Yet, that is our grievance. More than a hundred schools of Jashpur conducted by Jesuits, which were the main source of education to the Tribals, have been refused recognition and aid since Independence.

"(2) Since Dr. Katju made his statement in Parliament last year, many hundreds of Tribals have been caught hold of and forced to give their thumb impressions to documents of which they have no knowledge. I do not know how this tyranny could be justified.

"(3) So-called leaders of political parties have entered Churches and urinated inside it in open daylight in order to excite the worshippers. No action has been taken against the offender, in spite of reports lodged with the Police and administrative officers. A member of the local Assembly raised a question on the floor of the House, but the Government did not give any reply.

"You will see, Sir, that a serious situation has developed in the Tribal areas, and these Tribal Christians are experiencing acute hardship and difficulties on account of their religion. When men can insult us and outrage our feelings by desecrating our Churches, you will admit, Sir, that the limit has been reached, and yet, Sir, the enquiry committee will not enquire into the persecution of these helpless tribal Christians. Can you call this justice, Sir?"

NEHRU: "I do not think that you are right there. Enquiries will be made into all aspects of the question."

FRANCIS: "I hope you are right, Sir, but I am afraid that the terms of reference given to the Committee do not justify your generous interpretation."

NEHRU: "Have you the terms of reference with you here?"

FRANCIS: "Yes, Sir. I have brought the Gazette Notification, and you can see it for yourself."

While I was explaining the position, the Prime Minister was engaged in taking notes. I noticed that he was writing fast. He was also making some scrawls on the margin. Except for the two or three interruptions noted above, he never spoke. My exposition may have taken about 15 minutes. I was nervous that I had transgressed the usual time-limit for an interview, and waited for the next move from him.

The Prime Minister then read over his notes and made some cross-marks. Then taking the paper in hand, he spoke substantially as follows:

PANDIT NEHRU'S REPLY

"Mr. Francis, I want you to understand my position. We have the Constitution. It lays down the powers and limitations of the Union Government and the State Governments. I have to function within these limits. You know that I am not a grand Moghul here. I cannot do as I like.

You have appealed to me to do a lot of things. If I could, I would certainly have helped in some matters. But if I have to respect the constitutional limitations, I cannot see my way to help.

There are also other considerations to which I am bound. I have to carry with me the loyalties of various groups and interests. In doing so, I have to be very careful to harmonise all their claims and demands. Very often, these claims and demands conflict with each other. It is difficult for me to take sides. I have first to reconcile conflicting points of view in the background of the Nation's interests.

In doing so, I have to appeal to many sections and groups to make a little sacrifice here or there. In life, we have to make many sacrifices for a larger good. It is only then that we have a proper balance of things.

In India today there is a national resurgence on a wide scale. It is a reaction to the conditions in which we were living—social, moral, and political conditions. This resurgence takes different forms, but in the ultimate analysis, it can only be traced to this reaction. We cannot stop or stifle it. There is no power that can do so. It rises from the will of the people to act as free men.

I know many things are happening in the country which are not to the liking of some people or parties. We have not to see what is happening, but to see why it is happening, and assess and evaluate these events from the larger point of view of the Nation as a whole. Some of these happenings might frighten some people, but we ought not to be alarmed. These developments were bound to take place in the life of the Nation

at some stage or another. In their full development, they are sure to find their natural level and canalise themselves into constructive activities.

Now, coming to missionary activities, I would like you to look at the problem from my point of view. The agitation now going on is another expression of the reaction to everything foreign. I do not say that it is right, or that it could be justified, or that it is based on well verified facts, but it is nevertheless there. It is that fact that we have to take into account. The agitation is there. To careful students of politics, there is nothing surprising in the phenomenon. It is the expression of the inmost thoughts and feelings of the people. Maybe that they are expressing themselves vehemently, but still it is the expression of their soul—it is an expression of their attitude towards certain activities.

The agitation by itself means nothing at this stage. Even the Enquiry means nothing. The sanction behind the agitation is the freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution."

FRANCIS: "May I humbly suggest, Sir, that the position in Madhya Pradesh is, that nothing has happened in the Tribal areas since Independence as the result of missionary activities, like mass conversions, or public disorder, or any developments likely to cause a breach of the peace, and yet an Enquiry Committee has been appointed? That is our grievance."

NEHRU: "I was coming to that point. I am getting hundreds of letters every day from different parts of India complaining against missionary activities. It is not necessary that riots should break out before an enquiry is ordered into a certain situation. An enquiry may serve many purposes, including preventive action.

"You have yourself referred to the ban on missionary activities in the integrated States before Independence. Again, I will not say that the ban was right or wrong. The fact remains that the ban imposed by the Rajahs had the approval of the British. Now, Mr. Francis, try to understand the psychology of the people behind the agitation. They are telling themselves that the British were Christians and should have known all about missionary methods. When the British, with full inside knowledge of these methods had banned Christianity in the Tribal areas, one of the reasons surely was the danger of exploiting the ignorance of the aborigines. If that danger was there in the times of the British Government, it is there still. Why then should we try to be wiser than the British and allow these missionaries to exploit the ignorance of these backward people?

"Please, Mr. Francis, try to understand this psychology. Let me repeat, I do not say that these people are right. They

may be wrong for all I know, but that is *how their mind is* working and we may take note of it.

"After all, there is no harm done in instituting an enquiry. Maybe that the allegations levelled at the missionaries will prove to be baseless. On the other hand, if some allegations are proved, they should serve missionaries as a guidance and warning for the future."

The Prime Minister was expressing himself slowly and suavely, weighing his words before uttering them. I felt that there was a good deal of force in what he was saying, but at that moment, I also felt that he was not aware of the ill-will and communal hatred by which the local officials were animated in their treatment of the Tribals. I was about to open my mouth when with a broad smile he said: "I will tell you something very interesting. It interested me a great deal, and I have had the facts verified."

"It happened in my own home town of Allahabad. With the best of intentions in the world, the missionaries may sometimes stamp on the toes of other people. A foreign missionary, who was reported to be a sincere friend of India, once went out of his way to tell the people of Allahabad, the result of an Arya Samajist's researches about Hinduism. These researches were not very complimentary to Hindus or Hinduism. He did not say a word of his own, but was reading passages after passages from a book written by the Arya Samajist author."

"Before he was able to read many passages, the crowd got out of control and manhandled the missionary. The Police had to rush to the street to protect the missionary."

"Now, study this case. The missionary may have had the best of intentions. He may have been genuinely convinced that the deductions made by the Arya Samajist scholar were fair and correct. He may even have thought that the Arya Samajist could not have been prejudiced against Hinduism. Granting all this, you might agree with me that he chose a wrong audience for a verdict on the Arya Samajist scholar."

"Now, if you knew Sabji Mandi of old Delhi, many curious things might happen even today. Supposing a Hindu girl wanted to marry a Mussalman boy. I would say that it is their own business, and I am sure you will agree with me that it is no one else's business. But a rumour of this sort is bound to attract quite a crowd before the house of the girl and the house of the boy, threatening them with dire consequences. Although the parties concerned have a perfect right to select their partners in life, the State is faced with a situation in which action has to be taken to prevent a breach of the peace."

"I now come to your next point in which you complain of overweightage of Hindus on the Enquiry Committee. I will admit, that you have grounds for being upset. Even so, what

can the Committee do against you if you faced it with the evidence which will establish your innocence?"

FRANCIS: "Sir, the Government is rubbing us on a sore point. Have we no voice at all? Is not ours a responsible Government? I cannot see what harm would have been done if Muslims and Parsis had been appointed, or Christians were given parity of representation with Hindus?"

NEHRU: "Mr. Francis, I am not justifying the selection. The selection was made by your State Government. They may have had very good reasons for their selection. I do not know these reasons, but there it is, and as it is, it is a matter outside my jurisdiction. Even though I concede you have grounds to be upset, I am altogether helpless to have the panel changed. You can understand what might happen if I interfered in matters which are outside my jurisdiction."

FRANCIS: "When a thing is palpably wrong, is there no remedy for poor minorities?"

NEHRU: "The only constitutional remedy is an appeal to the law courts, but this is not a matter in which any harm has been done to any section of the people. An enquiry is an attempt to collect information, and your Government might well argue that these are the men in whom it has its confidence for collecting the information. Now tell me how I can interfere in the affairs of your Government?"

FRANCIS: "Sir, I have come all this way in the hope that something will be done to assure us that injustice will not be done to us because of our faith. If you cannot help us, may we not expect your advice?"

NEHRU: "My advice is that regardless of what the Enquiry Committee might do, you should tender evidence to prove your case. No Committee can suppress the evidence tendered, and it will be for public opinion to see whether the findings are in accordance with the evidence."

NO ENQUIRY INTO PERSECUTION OF TRIBALS

After the advice given by the Prime Minister, I felt that he had left no room for further discussion, and I thanked him for it, and promised to communicate it to the people concerned. Thereafter the Prime Minister proceeded.

NEHRU: "Your last apprehension is that there would be no enquiry into the story of harassments. I am afraid that on this point, you have come to a hasty conclusion. I see from your file that the terms of reference given to the Committee specifically lay down an enquiry into the story of harassments."

FRANCIS: "Sir, the position has been cleverly camouflaged. That is my grievance. According to the terms of reference, the Committee can only go into the question whether *missionaries* had been harassed by officials. I do not plead for missionaries.

As far as I am aware, the missionaries have not complained of harassment by officials. I know that they were, and are still being harassed very badly, but they are standing up to these harassments without complaining. My complaint is that the *Tribal people* are being harassed and persecuted because they have become Christians. I have been sent here by these Tribal people. They have charged me with the duty of telling the Prime Minister that they were the victims, and the enquiry will be made into somebody else's grievances."

The Prime Minister thereupon read the M.P. Gazette Notification again, and lapsed into thought. After some time, he said:

NEHRU: "As I told you, I cannot issue any orders to the State Government. I can only advise them. In this particular case, I see the distinction between harassment of missionaries and harassment of the people. If the people have been complaining of harassment, as you allege, then it does make a difference. I will try to advise the Government of Madhya Pradesh to see if the terms of reference could not be widened to include enquiry into the alleged harassments of the people. Of course, it would be for the State Government to accept or not to accept my advice."

FRANCIS: "We would be satisfied, Sir, that you tendered this advice."

NEHRU: "That is all that I can do."

I took leave of the Prime Minister. While shaking hands he smilingly remarked: "Good-bye Mr. Francis. Don't be upset. Things will settle down to their proper proportions after some time."

THE NIYOGI REPORT AND ITS SOURCES

By

WILLIAM COELHO

We expect that the report which any public Commission or Committee has to submit to Government will be based almost exclusively on the oral and written evidence which that body has collected in the course of its enquiry. As such a Commission is concerned with investigating a current issue or an event of recent occurrence, the study of historical problems hardly finds a place in its report, and a historical bibliography does not form a part of its sources. The background history of the subject of enquiry, essentially non-controversial, is drawn, if necessary, from standard books of history. No historical research is called for in giving the outline of well-known historical facts. But the Niyogi Committee adds a long bibliography of 83 books as an appendix to its report; and from a study of this document it is clear that the Committee has made a greater use of these books than of the evidence it has collected and published.

The reason why the Committee undertook this scheme of historical research instead of confining itself to the study of its oral and written evidence is given in the Report. The Resolution of the Madhya Pradesh Government which appointed the Committee wanted it, among other things, to give a "thorough review of the question from historical and other points of view". From the context of the Resolution it may be inferred that the background history of the missionary activities in Madhya Pradesh was expected, though the phrase "other points of view" is vague. But the Committee understood the reference to mean a comprehensive study of Christianity in India from Apostolic times down to the present day; and what is more surprising, it pretends to have felt, even at the initial stages of its enquiry, that its work "transcended the bounds of any one country or region in the world and that it

was calculated to have world-wide repercussions". The Committee was therefore compelled, it avers, "to view the subject as an integral part of a larger picture on the broad canvas of world history" (N.R., p. 4).*

To an ordinary student of history this may seem a very ambitious, nay extravagant, programme. But the Committee knew what it was about. It required certain material with which it could prove its thesis—that Christianity is a menace to India. Unlike a judge or a historian who approaches his subject with an open mind, the Committee, which knew its conclusions beforehand, found its task of collecting its material—its bibliography as well as its oral and written evidence—easier.

Pre-conceived Notions

That the Committee had certain pre-conceived notions is made clear in the Report itself. A report should ordinarily start with the Government resolution or order by which the Committee is appointed. But the Niyogi Committee relegates the Resolution of the Madhya Pradesh Government to the appendix and writes a chapter instead, entitled *Circumstances leading to the appointment of the Committee*. This is Chapter II of the Report, the first being the *Introduction*; and it is written to justify the Government's policy and conduct in relation to Christians in Madhya Pradesh. The Government Resolution read together with Chapter II of the Report gives an insight into the object of the Committee.

The Resolution says that representations had been made to Government that Christian missionaries had been converting backward people by force or fraud, that missions were used for political or extra-religious purposes, but that the missionaries denied these allegations and put in a counter-complaint against harassment by non-Christian people and local officials. Therefore a public enquiry was necessary (N.R., p. 170).

The Government however persistently refused to publish the allegations against the missionaries or to make them available for scrutiny by members of the public. No doubt the Committee collected a lot of charges as evidenced by the contents of Chapter II, which also gives rise to the suspicion that the secret complainants who prompted the Government to appoint the Committee figure prominently in the course of the evidence. What is more, the Chapter indicates that the Government itself had a prejudice against the missionaries and

* N.R. stands for Niyogi Report, Vol. I.

that it wanted to justify its anti-Christian policy through the pages of the Report.

In the last paragraph of the Chapter the Committee says: "It will thus be seen that whereas on the one hand an impression was being created all over India at the instance of foreign missionaries engaged in the Udaipur and Sarguja States that the Madhya Pradesh Government was following a policy of discrimination or harassment of the Christian population and missionaries, on the other hand numerous complaints were being received of the objectionable activities of these foreign missionaries, especially in the tribal areas and public resentment was mounting up" (N.R., p. 23).

Clearly the Committee's object, as indicated in the concluding sentences of Chapter II, was to defend the Government against the complaints made by the missionaries "in respect of authorities outside Madhya Pradesh" and to counteract the "vile propaganda" carried on by them in the foreign press (N.R., p. 23). The Committee was apparently appointed to indict the missionaries, and it was therefore logical that representative Christians should be excluded from membership of the Committee. There should be no dissenting minute. The prejudged findings should be endorsed by every member. It is necessary for us to examine the procedure adopted by the Committee to collect its material, and to prove that the material so collected with a biased motive has no intrinsic value.

Stages in the Procedure

The first stage in the procedure was an exploratory tour of the Committee in fourteen districts between June 1954 and November 1955. It visited 77 centres and interviewed 11,360 people (N.R., p. 2). This multitude of people was met in groups; that is to say, public meetings were held under the auspices of the Committee, which provided opportunities to anti-Christian leaders to make inflammatory speeches or to coach and prompt villagers to complain against missionaries. No attempts were made by the Committee at this stage to cross-examine the witnesses or to allow the accused to do so. Strong protests were raised against this procedure, but to no avail. In whatever it did the Committee was right, and the Government, on whose behalf the Committee was working, refused to interfere (N.R., II-B, Chapter 1).

Another part of the procedure was to issue an elaborate questionnaire to enable the Committee to make "a thorough

and searching probe into the problem" (N.R., p. 4). The Questionnaire (N.R., II-A, Chapter 4) consists of 99 questions a hundred minus one, almost everyone a leading question and almost everyone fishing for opinions rather than facts. And opinions the Committee did receive, it would seem, from the same anti-Christian leaders who had pressed the Government to launch the enquiry and helped the Committee during its exploratory tour.

A few examples of the questions may be given here:

What are the methods used for conversion?

Are any of the following methods used—advancing loans, giving free education to children, offering employment, holding out hopes of better marriages, extolling Christianity and foreign culture, extolling Jesus Christ and decrying non-Christian deities, threatening danger of eternal damnation, other fraudulent and unfair means?

Do you know of cases where conversion has been the result of religious conviction?

Do you think that conversion to Christianity adversely affects the national loyalty and outlook of converts?

Do you know of cases where patients or school children were refused help at critical stages, unless they got themselves converted?

Do you know of instances of foreign missionaries taking part in activities other than religious or social?

Have you noticed any improvement in the moral level of converts to Christianity?

Examples may be multiplied to show how enormous the Committee's insinuations were. No wonder the Catholics protested against the procedure and the Questionnaire (cf. N.R., II-B, Chapter 1). But the Committee consoled itself with the idea that "the response to the Questionnaire was encouraging, indicating as it did the co-operation of the public as well as of the Protestant Missionary bodies" (N.R., p. 5). It was unfortunate that while the Catholics protested, the Protestants co-operated. But no one will regret the Protestant co-operation more than the Protestants themselves, for none of their sober and dignified statements weighed with the Committee while drawing up the Report.

There were 55 replies to the Questionnaire from Christians and 330 from non-Christians, out of which the Committee has published as many as thirteen replies from Christians, all in defence of missionaries, and only five from non-Christians (N.R., II-A, Chapter 5). But these five who seem to be

influential anti-Christian leaders are given greater importance in the Report than the others. The reply of one of them, R. K. Deshpande, covers no less than 60 pages of the Report, and not only supplies necessary material to the Committee but even seems to guide it in historical methodology. Deshpande's methodology is not that of a dispassionate historian or of a judge in a democratic country. It is a brief which quotes only such references, historical or otherwise, as bear out his thesis, and the Committee's Report is an expansion thereof.

Oral Evidence

Oral evidence was taken by the Committee at various centres from 22nd July 1955 to 19th November 1955 to supplement the replies to the Questionnaire; and cross-questions were allowed at this stage. The oral statements of 301 witnesses have been published (N.R., II-B, Chapter 3). These include peasants, artisans, school-masters, lawyers (amongst whom the usual anti-Christian associates figure prominently) and Protestant Missionaries. Some of the last-mentioned were upholders of independent national churches. Much of which is recorded is hearsay evidence and has not been verified. Evidence of unfair means of conversion was given by lepers who became Christians, so they stated, for the sake of treatment; and by poor students who are reported to have received free education only after conversion. When they did not require help from the missionaries any more, they reverted to Hinduism with the assistance of Arya Samajists. It is patent to any casual reader that the witnesses were the mouthpieces of their present leaders. Hungry and diseased people who were alleged to have become Christians for the sake of material gain could easily be made to give evidence against the missionaries for the same inducement, if not on coercion.

But the Committee was not concerned with the motives of witnesses so long as their depositions substantiated the charges against the missionaries contained in the Government Resolution. The Committee was called upon only to enquire whether the missionaries made conversions "either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary and other gain". It was not for the Committee to enquire whether evidence *against* the missionaries was given forcibly or through fraud and temptation of monetary and other gain. The Committee pleads it was not a judicial body. It could not compel witnesses to attend before it. It could not administer an oath to

them (N.R., p. 4). It meant that anybody would come forward and lie, and so it was done. In consequence the task of the Committee should have been all the more difficult if it wished to sift the truth. But it selected just that evidence which fitted in with its purposes. That the Committee was not judicial, either in its procedure or in its findings, is amply illustrated in the Report in the Chapter entitled: *Missionary activities in Madhya Pradesh since Independence, as disclosed by oral and documentary evidence.*

The procedure adopted by the Committee in collecting the published material and drawing up the Bibliography is not far different. It knew beforehand, or it was told by its associates, which books would be useful for its purpose. But having discovered that some of these were not "readily available" it went to the "open market" (N.R., p. 1). The Bibliography itself is drawn up in a haphazard manner. There is no order, alphabetical or any other. There is no classification; no attempt is made to separate the primary from the secondary sources. The titles of the books are entered first, and the names of the authors come after. In many cases the names of the authors and the titles of the books are wrongly given. The Committee has failed to give the names of the publishers, or the location of the market from where it might have acquired them. The result is that on a search being made in 29 important libraries of India for the purpose of verification twelve of the listed books could not be traced.

One of the books mentioned in the Bibliography, Dr. Bouquet's *Comparative Religion*, is listed twice. Therefore actually the list may be reduced to 82 books, 70 available for verification and twelve not available. Besides there are approximately 39 other books, pamphlets or articles not listed in the Bibliography but referred to in the Report. Most of them could not be checked as they could not be found. No reference is made in the Report to the books mentioned in the Bibliography under numbers 1, 5, 7, 9, 15, 23, 34, 42, 44 and 62. If they were not read by the Committee or were not useful to it, they should not have been entered in the Bibliography.

The reason why some of these books were ignored may be guessed. For instance, *Our Missionary Life in India, 1917*, stated in the Bibliography as having been written "by a Catholic", shows on its cover page that the author is Rev. Joseph Carroll, O.S.F.C., Miss. Apos. Diocese of Allahabad.

The purpose of the book as stated in the Preface is "... to help in some measure those new to the country who may not have the advantage of a regular course of training". Its contents clearly belie many of the charges brought against missionaries. For instance:

"The missionary will exercise care and prudence in what relates to the reception of converts" (p. 187).

"There should be no great hurry in the work of preparing catechumens for Baptism. A reasonable time should be allowed to test their motives and to prove their earnestness. No inducement of temporal advantage must, on any account, be even distantly held out to them to insure their purpose; and less regard ought to be shown for their demands even than for those of others who are in no way concerned. The reason is obvious and might be explained to them. As a rule not less than a year ought to be given to the preparation of catechumens of an age to be instructed" (p. 188).

Another book conveniently ignored is E. de Meulder's *India Immortal*. The author has spent over twenty years among the Adivasis, Christian and non-Christian. The book shows praise for the people and the culture of the land and expresses its hope for the future. But these observations do not suit the Committee's purpose.

Qualifications of Historians

It has been said that "history should be written not from the Bar but from the Bench". Accuracy and objectivity are basic requisites for the writing of history. The historian should be honest and impartial. He should possess a critical sense. He should be able to test his sources and interpret them correctly and intelligently. But it is clear to any reader of the Report that its authors show few of these attributes. To give but two examples, the Chapters entitled *History of Christian Missions, with special reference to old Madhya Pradesh and the Merged States*, and *Christian Post-War Policy*.

In the first chapter the Committee has made an attempt to write the entire history of Christianity in India. Now this is an extremely difficult subject, being vast and controversial. It is a history of conflicts among various sects and religious orders, of men who played an important part in it and of chroniclers who gave their own versions of it. But the Committee found no difficulty in writing authoritatively on it. It did not have to test its sources. It had already selected them:

Two-thirds of them were Protestant sources, with the aid of which the Committee could find fault with the Catholic Church; one-eighth, Catholic books, which enlightened the Committee on the misdeeds of the Protestants; and the remaining, anti-Christian books, invaluable for denouncing Christianity in general and the Christian missions in particular.

According to the Report, the aggressive missionary era of the Catholic Church in India began with the Portuguese. The growth of the Protestant Church was due mainly to British support. Without force or influence, it is inferred, Christianity would not have spread in the country. It has not contributed to the cultural growth of India. If anything, it has helped to denationalise the Indian Christians.

The next chapter, *Christian Post-War World Policy*, is even more amazing. The policy of the Christian Churches in Independent India is a matter of current history, and is known to the public. Without much effort the Committee could have obtained authoritative information from the heads of Churches and religious orders to realise that every one of them is striving to Indianise the clergy, to nationalise the hierarchy and to make the churches and orders financially and administratively autonomous. This is in keeping with the dignity of our Republic and conducive to our national prestige and solidarity. Instead, the Committee profusely quotes documents of International Protestant Conferences and arrives at the naive conclusion that the Papacy and the American Democracy are *united* in "their frantic drive for gathering proselytes to Christianity to combat Communism: the former to extend its religious empire and the latter to obtain world leadership" (N.R., p. 60). This is a case of not only going beyond the terms of reference but straying beyond the bounds of reason.

The last, but the most difficult part of the historian's work, that of interpreting the verified facts of history is totally lacking in the history written by the Committee. The reason is clear. If the findings are decided upon before research is begun, the methodology is bound to be different from that of the normal historian. One has only to select favourable interpretations from other scholars and prefix them to the prejudged conclusions. It is not necessary to digest the facts of history and much less to interpret them. This is why the Report abounds in quotations and reads like an immature under-graduate student's notes in history.

Tampering with Material

But it is not a mere case of immaturity in historical learning. It is something far worse. Quotations are mutilated and torn out of context to prove a particular thesis. On a careful scrutiny it was found that out of the 82 books listed in the Bibliography 71 were quoted in the Report 250 times. The most biassed books, 13 in number, were quoted more frequently. 204 quotations were checked by us, and it was found that there were 85 errors and 23 misquotations; 29 were quoted out of context, and there were distortions and mutilations in 33 cases.

It is not possible to take up every one of these quotations for criticism within the space of a chapter. But the most important may be considered to show how the Committee has garbled historical material.*

Asirvatham, Eddy, *Christianity in the Indian Crucible*.

The book is quoted five times in the Report. In the first place it is quoted to show that Indian churches largely depend on foreign financial aid (N.R., p. 102). Though the quotation is correct, it is out of context: the money element is only one aspect of the question of conversions. Asirvatham agrees that some evil is noticed in a few cases. But to generalise this and apply it to Christianity as a whole is certainly not the intention of the author (cf. Asirvatham, pp. 40-41).

The book is referred to again in the Report in the section entitled *Danger of Foreign Control During Crisis*:

"On many occasions Gandhiji expressed his suspicion about the ulterior motives of Missionary enterprise. Dr. Asirvatham points out that such a suspicion springs from the manifestation of the American foreign policy in such aggressive forms as in the slogan: 'Let Asians fight Asians.'" (N.R., p. 146).

But the reference is incorrect because of an important omission from the original:

"But it is likely to be revived now because of the aggressive aspects of American Foreign Policy in the East. The slogan 'Let Asians fight Asians' will long be remembered by the oriental and be used against America and the Missions" (Asirvatham, p. 35).

The Committee describes the slogan as a "manifestation

* The books discussed in the following pages are arranged in alphabetical order.

of the American Foreign Policy", while Asirvatham says it is likely to be used against America and the Missions.

It is surprising that the Committee gave importance to this book while ignoring Dr. Asirvatham's more recent views, more clearly expressed in his answers to the Committee's Questionnaire (N.R., II-A, pp. 274-278).

Bates, M. Searle, *Religious Liberty*.

This book is the most quoted, forty times in the Report. Searle Bates, former Rhodes Scholar and Professor of History at the University of Nanking was appointed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (Protestant) and the Foreign Missions' Conference of North America, to make this study of religious liberty. The book is biased against the Catholic Church as is clear from even a cursory glance at the index or from a reading of pp. 432-468 where the Catholic doctrines on faith and morals are attacked (especially the one on the infallibility of the Pope). The aim of the book is to prove and to show that the Catholic Church deviated from the true Church instituted by Christ, whereas by the coming of Protestantism the Church was restored to the true ideal of Christ's Church. Knowing full well the extreme bias of this book, the Niyogi Committee nevertheless rushes into the subject without making any distinction between the attackers and the attacked, between the Protestant Church and the Catholic Church. Even Bates concedes that the charge of 'prejudice' on his part would be expected (p. viii).

It is not possible to deal with the vast quantity of false accusations made in *Religious Liberty*; still less could all the methods employed by the Niyogi Committee in quoting, or rather misquoting, from Bates be discussed here. Only a few examples to illustrate these points can be given.

The Report gives the definition of "religious liberty" from Bates (N.R., p. 61). It is in accordance with the religious liberty guaranteed in our Constitution. But the Report conveniently refrains from referring to what follows in Bates on the same page. It speaks of national and international obligations to uphold religious liberty. With regard to national obligations it says:

"The State must guard all groups, both minority and majority, against legal disabilities on account of religious belief; the people must exercise their rights with a sense of responsibility and with charitable consideration for the rights of others." (Bates, p. 309.)

This corollary added by Bates would have gone against the policy of the Madhya Pradesh Government and the recommendations of the Committee.

To prove that Christians, unlike Hindus, were intolerant to alien religions in the course of history, the Report quotes two scholars, de Ruggiero and Raffini, from quotations given in Bates (N.R., p. 62). But Bates quoted them, not to support their contention as the Committee does, but to refute them, and to say that there was tolerance among the early Christians (Bates, p. 133).

Again the Report quotes Bates (N.R., p. 63) to prove that there was forcible conversion to Christianity under Theodosius and Justinian (N.R., p. 63). But Bates quotes from McSorley, *An Outline of the Church by Centuries*, pp. 123-124, and Latourette (a well-known anti-Christian) *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, p. 183.

The Report further quotes historical events from pp. 155, 156 in Bates to prove intolerance and persecution on the part of Catholics and Protestants during the period of the Reformation, and concludes: "Such is the history of religious liberty under Christianity in the West" (N.R., p. 65). But the Report fails to note Bates' opinion that the Fathers of the Church from early times warned against oppression (Bates, 137, 138). He continues:

"Persecution was by no means continuous or universal; it was frequently the work of political men rather than of religious ones (though in the medieval centuries the bishops and the abbots were both); and it could often be defended on the grounds that the assailed were rebels against the legal or social order (Bates, p. 139).

Even with regard to Indian history, which should have been comparatively more familiar to the Committee, the Report profusely quotes Bates, sometimes without giving the page number, to narrate the Muslim persecution of the Hindus in Mughal times (N.R., p. 69). But the Report further quotes Bates as a palliative:

"In general India has not thought or organised or legislated in terms of the oppression of religion or of the liberty of religion. Striving of religio-social groups there has been."

But the Report has distorted Bates' opinion by not giving what follows in Bates by way of explanation:

"However it must be recalled that the Marathas (Hindus) in the first half of the eighteenth century, as early in the sixteenth, demolished Christian churches in the Portuguese pos-

sessions which they overran and took many Christians as captive slaves. Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore in the latter half of the eighteenth century displayed Islamic ferocity against unbelievers in their harsh treatment of Christians. The Portuguese not only used material inducements to secure baptisms, but sometimes turned force against non-Christian shrines and worship" (so far on the authority of Latourette, III, pp. 271, 282). And then Bates continues: "Hence, it is only in the political development of recent years, in the missionary introduction of fresh Christian undertakings, and in the social and intellectual change of the contemporary scene that the issue of religious liberty has become apparent. . . . The chief social persecution of the Christians has come from Hindus; indeed, Christianity has had little significant contact with Islam in India" (Bates, p. 271).

To describe the state of religious freedom in Catholic Italy the Report quotes Bates (N.R., p. 71). But Bates himself takes the quotations from a most suspect group of authors: e.g. the Fascist Giurati; Salvador de Madariaga, an atheist; Alvarez de Vayo, a communist; Alvaro de Albornoz, from the party of Portella Valladares, both freemasons receiving orders through Martinez Barrio, Grand Orient of Freemasonry for Spain.

In the matter of education in Italy the Report quotes Bates:

" 'Liberty of conscience' in a Catholic state was interpreted to mean 'liberty to accept the church's guidance of conscience without interference by the State' " (N.R., p. 71).

But the quotation is out of context, because from the Report it would appear that it came from the Italian Government, whereas Bates gives it from a letter of Pope Pius XI to Cardinal Gaspari, his Secretary of State, regarding the rights of the church over man's conscience, trampled down by the totalitarian Fascist regime of Mussolini (cf. Bates, p. 45).

After Italy the Report reviews the state of religious liberty in Spain, Portugal, France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Russia, Greece, Great Britain, Germany, United States, Japan and China; but all facts and opinions are taken from Bates, *Religious Liberty, ad nauseam*. The Committee did not find any other source to verify, confirm or contradict Bates, nor did it use him correctly. To mention a few references with regard to these countries, the Report gives a mutilated quotation from Bates to convey the impression that the Portuguese State has no voice in the subject of religious freedom (N.R., p. 74). The

quotation from the original is given here, and the omission made in the Report italicised:

"For the teaching of the Catholic religion, the text-books must be passed by the ecclesiastical authorities, *and the teachers will be appointed by the State in agreement with the said authorities.* In no case shall religious instructions be given by persons not approved by the ecclesiastical authorities as competent" (Bates, p. 98).

With regard to religion in Russia the Report remarks on the authority of Bates:

"The situation, however, changed after 1944. The Central Organisation of the Russian Orthodox Church has been officially restored" (N.R., p. 77).

Bates, however, does not end in the same happy note as it is evident from what has been said in continuation and what the Report has omitted:

"Whether through three terms in the prisons of the State police, whether through persistence in spiritual testings unnumbered, whether through ability to rally the hearts of believers in sturdy support of the invaded Fatherland, Sergei came to be trusted by the political authority; and Alexei has succeeded him, of course, in the functions of Patriarch" (Bates, p. 9).

Basing itself on the authority of Bates the Report says that in Japan:

"Religious freedom is limited to belief. It is to be exercised within the limits of law of the land and consistent with the duties of the individual to the State as its subject" (N.R., p. 82).

This may be compared with the relevant passage in Bates:

"The grant is limited to belief. It is specifically to be limited by ordinary law and police supervision. It is, like clauses of religious and civil rights in most constitutions, guarded in the interests of peace and order" (Bates, p. 49).

Bouquet, A. C., *Comparative Religion*.

Bouquet was an Anglican Minister and a lecturer at Oxford in the History of Religion. The book is of the rationalist type, and superficial in nature. This is the book which is mentioned twice in the Bibliography, but referred to only once in the Report, and that too out of context. Bouquet tries to explain the abrupt breach between Hebrew and Christian religions by putting forward the thesis that by changing religion people violate traditions and cut themselves off from their

social sphere. Bouquet however confesses that "this thesis may be arguable, though not entirely convincing". But the Niyogi Committee is not only convinced of the thesis and quotes it fully, but applies it, and out of Bouquet's context, to Christianity in India:

"It is on account of this foreign influence brought to bear upon Christian converts that Christianity is still regarded as foreign in India.

"The various ways which we have already indicated are nothing short of abuse of 'the religious liberty' by the Constitution of India" (N.R., p. 152).

The Catholic Directory of India.

It is interesting to find the changes made in the Report of the passages from the Directory (N.R., p. 38). The Directory says: 'The Carnatic Mission was founded by the French Jesuits about the year 1700 (p. 350); while the Report says "from 1700". Again the Directory: "1713, Propaganda erects the Prefecture of Tibet and entrusts it to the Italian Capuchins" (p. 109); but in the Report it becomes: "The Italian Capuchins penetrated into Tibet". And finally on pp. 107-110 of the Directory it is said:

1498—The landing of the Portuguese.

1700—Catholics: about 800,000, including 100,000 St. Thomas Christians.

1756—Catholics: 1,059,000 in India and Ceylon.

From this the Report concludes: "within 200 years after the Portuguese landed in India, it is claimed, the Catholic church had 9,58,000 adherents in India (*Catholic Directory*, 1950)", while a few lines earlier on the same page the Report says: "By 1700 India had 600,000 of Catholics". Thus at one place the Report adds 158,000 to the figure of 800,000 given in the Directory, and at another subtracts 200,000.

Crozier, J. B., *Civilisation and Progress*.

The notion of Faith given in the book is rationalistic. The Report quotes the book once (N.R., p. 59), but the text is badly mutilated. The full text as it appears in the book is given below. What appears in the Report is italicised. (The Report does not indicate in any way that there have been omissions.)

"Instead of making dogma paramount as formerly, they (Priesthood) proclaimed with even increasing emphasis that *the essence of religion lay in conduct and life, in the attitude*

of heart and emotions, and not in any set of intellectual dogmas whatever; and moreover that it was not a scientific knowledge or intellectual belief at all, but was entirely a matter of faith; a thing not to be argued or proven, but to be accepted in trust and lowly obedience" (Crozier, p. 220; not p. 227 as given in the Report).

Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*.

One quotation with a significant omission is given in the Report (N.R., p. 39) to show that only ignorant people can be converted to Christianity, and that it is impossible to influence the intelligentsia. The original quotation, with the omission by the Report in italics, is given here.

"They cannot promise aught which their hearers were not sure of before . . . the Pandit and the Mullah can each oppose dialectics to dialectics, morality to morality, and revelation to revelation. Our zealous preachers may create sects among themselves, they may persevere in their laudable resolution of bringing up the orphans of heathen parents *and they may gain some converts among the intelligent inquirers as well as among the ignorant and the indigent*; but it seems hopeless that this should ever Christianize the Indian and Mahomedan worlds" (Cunningham, pp. 19-20).

The reason why the Report omits the section in italics, especially the phrase "among the intelligent inquirers" is quite clear. If included it would not fit in well with the next sentence in the Report:

"The Indian Christians drawn nearly entirely from the lower castes were looked down upon and despised. It seemed impossible that they could be the evangelists of India."

Devanandan, P. D., and Thomas, M. M., *Communism and the Social Revolution in India* (1953).

The book is prepared under the auspices of the Committee (of Protestants of which the authors are the leaders) for Special Literature on the Indian Church and Social Concerns. It is divided into three sections. The third section deals with special religious questions arising from the Communist challenge. One of them is the fact that the Communists have an additional weapon against Christians—their disunity. The book then urges the Christians in India to be united according to the desire of Christ. But the Report uses these exhortations to deprecate the dependence of the Indian Christians on foreign domination, as if it were political and not spiritual. The

Report then recommends the establishment of a "United Independent Christian Church in India" (N.R., p. 155).

Dubois, Abbe, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*.

The Report quotes Abbe Dubois in its section entitled *Evangelism not a Religious Philosophy but a Force* (N.R., p. 149). The quotation is taken not from the body of the book but from an extract from one of Abbe's letters inserted in the editor's introduction to the publication. The letters themselves were the subject of much controversy when the Abbe returned to France. To substantiate the assertion that Christianity is not so much a religious philosophy as a force, the Report says:

"This is borne out by Abbe Dubois' remark that the Hindus soon found that those Missionaries . . . were in fact nothing else but disguised Feringes . . . who had of late invaded the country."

It would appear from the Report that "who" in this quotation refers to the Missionaries whereas in the original it refers to the Feringhis who were the conquerors. The full text in Dubois is as follows (the part which appears in the Report is italicised):

"The Hindus soon found that those missionaries whom their colour, their talents, and other qualities had induced them to regard as such extraordinary beings, as men coming from another world, *were in fact nothing else but disguised Feringis* (Europeans), and that their country, their religion, and original education were the same as those of the evil, the contemptible Feringhis, *who had of late invaded the country*" (Dubois, p. xxv).

Eliot, Charles, *Hinduism and Buddhism*.

Reference is made to Eliot in the following statement in the Report (N.R., p. 155):

"Hospitals and dispensaries have been the favourite medium of approach to the masses for conversion. This is sought to be justified on the ground that Jesus commanded his disciples to preach and heal. Such spiritual expressions cannot bear literal interpretation. As observed by Sir Charles Eliot 'they are mostly the result of an attempt to describe a mind and a will of more than human strength, but the superman thus idealised rarely works miracles of healing. He saves mankind by teaching the way of salvation, not by alleviating a few chance cases of physical distress'."

Several items must be noted in this quotation. First, the

chapter referred to in Eliot's book deals with mythology in Hinduism and Buddhism (pp. 325-345). He admits miracles, provided they are proved by evidence; and therefore the assertion made by the Niyogi Committee that "such scriptural expressions cannot bear literal interpretations" cannot be established from this book. The author is neither dealing with the interpretation of the scripture nor is he *ex professo* dealing with Christianity. Finally it is evident that the basic assumption of the Report regarding charitable works and conversions is unwarranted.

Fuller, Sir Bamfylde, *Empire of India*.

The book is referred to in the Report when describing the progress of Christianity in India. But the principal idea contained in Fuller is left out (N.R., p. 42). The first part of the quotation with the omissions made by the Report (printed in italics) is given below:

"The material benefits of missionary endeavours are to be seen very clearly in localities where *Christianity has been offered to classes that have remained outside the pale of Brahminism*—hill tribes for instance—and the lower strata of the coolie population" (Fuller, p. 210).

In the Report, *Hinduism* is substituted for *Brahmanism*, and the main theme of the original context, namely, the material benefits which have accompanied missionary endeavours has been omitted in the mutilated quotation. This idea has been developed by Fuller in the words which follow in continuation of the above text:

"Not only have conversions been numerous, they have been accompanied by a marked rise in the standard of comfort, and in the self-respect of the proselytes; and amongst the hill tribes of Eastern India, and the outcastes of some Madras districts, Christians are sharply distinguished from the non-Christians around them by a greater appreciation of neatness and cleanliness, and also, in some cases, by increased intelligence and industry" (Fuller, p. 210).

The Report believes that material benefits precede and are an incitement to conversion. But the passage just quoted from Fuller shows that such benefits are a result of the interior uplift following conversion.

In the second part of the quotation in the Report a whole clause has been omitted. It is given below in italics in its appropriate place:

"Amongst the higher and better educated classes *whose*

interests have naturally always attracted a very large share of missionary enthusiasm evangelism has been less successful . . ." (Fuller, p. 210).

The slowness of evangelization among the higher and better educated classes should, however, be taken along with what is said a little further down in Fuller on the same page, and which the Committee must have read with some distaste:

"But it is argued, and with justice, that in these circles success must not be measured by formal conversion, and that to missionary teaching and influence should be ascribed some measure of the advance in morality, and the character of aspirations, that have been manifested by the educated classes during the two last generations. . . .

These endeavours of recent years (the book was published in 1913) to promote the welfare of Indians, without exclusive regard to their proselytising effect, have kindled a spirit of sympathy which has gradually softened the antagonism towards Christianity that remains so evident in China."

Gandhi, M. K., *Christian Missions*.

On reading the Report on the question of the religion of the aborigines (N.R., p. 26), one is left with the impression that Mahatma Gandhi did not recognise the possibility that the aborigines might have a different religion from Hinduism (viz. Animism). But Gandhi says a few lines below the ones quoted in the Report:

"Cases of real honest conversion are quite possible. If some people for their inward satisfaction and growth change their religion, let them do so. As regards taking our message to the aborigines, I do not think I should go and give my message out of my own wisdom" (Gandhi, p. 192).

Was not Gandhi a Hindu? If so, why should there be the question of "taking our message" (of Hinduism) to the aborigines if they were already Hindus? Regarding the work *Christian Missions* as a whole, it must be remembered that Gandhi maintained that all religions are the same and true. Therefore in his mind there was no reason for conversion.

Heckel, E., *The Riddle of the Universe*.

While explaining the meaning of the secular state the Report says that though the Indian Constitution was based on the liberal principles evolved in Europe, it (the Constitution) "was not blind" to the cruelty and religious persecution in Christian countries (N.R., p. 134). How the Niyogi Committee

could read the mind of our Constitution is a mystery, but it maligns the Christian countries on the authority of Heckel. The Report quotes:

"It has been calculated that the number of men who lost their lives in the Papal persecutions of heretics, the Inquisition, the Christian religious wars, etc., is much more than 10,000,000" (Heckel, p. 293).

What follows in Heckel is even more interesting:

"But what is this in comparison with the tenfold greater number of the unfortunate moral victims of the Institutions and the priestly domination of the degenerate Christian church—with the unnumbered millions whose higher mental life was extinguished, whose conscience was tortured, whose family life was destroyed by the Church?" (Heckel, p. 293).

Is it possible that the Niyogi Committee was ignorant of the anti-Christian, atheistic and the rationalistic nature of this writer? Already in 1910 there were written such estimates of Heckel as the following:

"No doubt in his own country his authority is largely on the wane, and amongst real men of science it has not been seriously regarded" (*The Month*, October 1910).

Dr. Weisner, a distinguished scientist, states in the same article from the *Month*:

"Heckel in his most recent writing exhibits himself as a fanatical misleader of the people, one who with delusive assurance enunciates what have long been recognised for errors and mistakes as if they were verities, and who treats his opponents with unexampled insolence."

And Professor Paulsen of Berlin, whom none will accuse of being a clerical partisan, concludes a careful examination of the Riddle of the Universe in these terms in the same issue of the *Month*:

"I have read this book with burning shame; shame for the condition of our people in general and philosophical culture. That such a work should be possible, that it should be produced, printed, bought, read, and admired amongst people which has had a Kant, a Goethe, and Schopenhauer—this is truly lamentable."

Hocking, *Rethinking Missions*.

This is a report of the Commission, with Dr. Hocking as its President, appointed by the laymen's Foreign Mission inquiry to study the missions in the Far East, and to make recommendations concerning their future. The Commission visited India,

Burma, China and Japan. The report was published in 1932. It is not a biased report, but the quotations from it are twisted or taken out of context in the Niyogi Report.

Speaking of Christian post-war world policy the Report quotes Hocking (p. 35):

'This is in accordance with what was recommended in the report of the Missions in Rural India in 1930, p. 126, and the idea of the conquest of the world by Christianity" (N.R., p. 57).

The context of the original is a purely spiritual one. In the Niyogi Report it is made to appear in a political sense also.

When discussing the impact of Christianity on the Karens in Burma the Report jumbles quotations from Hocking so thoroughly that at the end it is not clear whether the original censures or praises the missionaries (N.R., pp. 51, 139).

In speaking about *Historical Missions and Politics*, (N.R., p. 148) the Niyogi Report gives two quotations from Hocking. But both of them appear in a different context in the original. The first refers to religious problems at home; and the second explains the occasions to go abroad. In the Report the quotations are turned against the missionaries. But the original clearly states:

"This association with the conquest or gainful adventure has frequently been read to the discredit of the sincerity of the missionary, or again, he has been considered a dupe or tool of national or commercial interest. Such interpretations overlook the obvious and natural for the artificial explanation" (Hocking, p. 10).

Keyserling, Count, *Travel Diary of a Philosopher*.

In a panegyric on Buddhism which is incidentally compared in certain aspects to Christianity, Keyserling writes in his chapter on Kandy:

"The whole teaching of Buddha bears unmistakably the stamp of the princely mind. . . . *Christianity was originally a religion of the proletariat; it was in opposition to the favoured classes from the beginning; prejudice in favour of lives which have failed and resentment against those who are happy belong to the soul if not the spirit of this religion and it therefore carries wherever it turns, the seed of disruption.* It is of the greatest significance that the religion of peace par excellence caused the greatest discontent. No matter how high-minded its founder was, his mind was not superior to the problems of the world" (Keyserling, p. 56).

What the Report has extracted from this quotation (N.R.,

p. 58) is given in italics. Count Keyserling in his book champions the aristocratic tradition, and he from his standpoint condemns the socially revolutionary implications of the new religion of Christian fraternity. This has nothing to do with political disruption which the Committee tries to substantiate by the garbled quotation.

Kunte, M. M. *The Vicissitudes of Aryan Civilisation in India* (1880).

The Report gives importance to this unscholarly work and calls it by a wrong title, *Vicissitudes of Indian Civilisation*. On page 26 of the Report an attempt is made to put up a historical argument to support Mahatma Gandhi's statement that the aboriginal tribes have from times immemorial been absorbed into Hinduism (cf. M. K. Gandhi, *Christian Missions*, referred to above). But neither Kunte nor the Report succeed in proving this. Kunte tries to show that there had been a fusion between the Aryans and the non-Aryans through inter-marriages. Now the instances of these inter-marriages, as quoted in the Report, are all taken from Mahabharata, the historical value of which is doubtful.

The Report, on the same page, quotes Kunte to show that the Nishadas, who are an aboriginal tribe, were sometimes included in the Pancha-Janah, i.e. the five-fold Aryans; and that they were gradually incorporated. Now on a careful scrutiny of the history of the Nishadas, this statement from Kunte does not seem to have sufficient historical evidence. In the original meaning of the Rigveda the Pancha-Janah are five groups or classes of Aryans and do not include even the Sudras (of the later classification) much less the Nishadas. Kunte's interpretation as quoted in the Report is based on a later explanation, which all scholars of repute reject as untenable and not recognisable with the original texts and their real context. The later systematisers, like the Manu Smriti, made all the known people descend from the Aryans by mixed marriages with people of "wrong" descent (Pratiloma unions). Hence even the Greeks and the Persians would belong to the Hindu-fold, a wild claim, and in no way a proof or a fact. At a later date all the outcastes beyond the more or less recognised Sudras, were considered to be beyond and outside the pale of Hindu Chaturvarnya, which only covers the Sudras proper. The Nishadas were only one of the tribal outcastes, who belong to the Panchamas rather than the Pancha-Janahs.

Kunte himself is modest in advancing his opinions.

Towards the end of the paragraph referred to in the Report (Kunte, p. 255) Kunte says: "Thus we have attempted the history of the lower classes of society. The sources of information on this subject are always limited." Kunte himself might have changed his opinions on further study. Hence there is no point in the Niyogi Report adducing shaky opinions of authors in order to build up a historical argument for its so-called Enquiry.

Laymen's Foreign Missions Enquiry Regional Reports of the Commission of Appraisal (Vol. I, 1933).

To substantiate the charge that undue influence is brought in mission hospitals on the patients for conversion the Report quotes the book as follows:

"... among the principles that were offered by the Committee as the basis of religious activities in Mission Hospitals are to be found the following:

- '1—the use of medical or other professional service as a direct means of making converts is improper;
- 2—evangelistic services in wards and dispensaries from which patients cannot escape are a subtle form of coercion and must therefore be given up'" (N.R., p. 156).

The italicised section does not appear in the original text. By adding this phrase the Report falsely insinuates that the Laymen's Commission of Appraisal found the coercion on patients a common practice everywhere. In the true context it is clear that the Commission does not generalize.

Marshman. Life and Times of Carey Marshman Ward.

This is a book in two volumes published in 1859, and deals with Protestant missions in India. The Report makes a reference to this work only once in connection with the debate in England held in 1813 regarding missionary activities in India (N.R., p. 39). It quotes, out of context, one Charles Marsh who was against sending missionaries to India. The Report fails to mention that the cause of the missions was largely supported. A reference to *Hansard* on the debate on the Charter Bill of 1813 would have given to the Niyogi Committee a clear idea of British public opinion on missionary activities.

Moon, Parker Thomas, Imperialism and World Politics.

Writing under the caption, *Historical Missions and Politics*, the Report observes that the nineteenth century saw a sudden

expansion of missionary activities and gives the following quotation from Moon:

"Going out to preach a kingdom not of this world, missionaries found themselves very often builders of very earthly empires" (N.R., p. 149).

But this must be viewed in the light of the author's statements in his chapter called "Conclusions".

"Into the question of the success and achievement or failures of missionary efforts in colonial territory we cannot enter seriously here, nor would the writer, after having visited the international missionary exhibit at the Vatican in 1925 with its bewildering wealth of impressive material, consider himself qualified to make any summary of missionary work. That would call for a more intimate knowledge of many countries than any one person is likely to acquire. There is one point, however, that may confidently be asserted. The extension of European political and economic control over pagan lands has not had the effect of Christianizing the natives. . . . While the missionary has been bringing the Gospel to the natives, the traders too often have brought rum and guns . . ." (Moon, pp. 561-562).

The National Christian Council Review, 1954-1955.

Referring to this Review the Report states:

"At the beginning of 1954, there were 16.8 per cent more educational, evangelical and other workers than were present in India in 1949. During 1937-1949 there was a 24.7 per cent reduction in the total of those citizens of the United Kingdom engaged in foreign missionary work. From 1947 to 1954 a further decrease of 12 per cent is noted" (N.R., p. 140).

The obvious impression given is that the above is a continuous narrative. In actual fact, the first sentence pertains to statistics given about American missionaries, while the rest is taken from a different paragraph and pertains to statistics given about British missionaries.

Again quoting from the Review the Report states:

"Dr. Pickett of North India speaking in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954, remarked that one of the reasons for the development of Church Unity was to obviate the danger of the growth of nationalism as the national churches were apt to reflect the spirit of political nationalism" (N.R., p. 144).

This reference is quoted from an article in the Review entitled, *Church Union and Nationalism*, written by Rev. E. L. Ananta Rao, who gives the text of Pickett's statement in order

to refute it. But the Report—to suit its purpose—ignores Ananta Rao's contention, and gives importance to Pickett.

Nishkalanka.

The *Nishkalanka* is edited by Catholics, but is in no way an "official organ of the Catholics" as stated in the Report (N.R., p. 51). Each writer bears full responsibility for his article.

When dealing with Jarkhand politics the Report makes reference to *Nishkalanka* and comments on the conduct of the Catholics as follows:

"The attitude of the Catholics was professedly against the agitation of Jarkhand or any separatist movement. Rameshwar Prasad Sharma (Jashpur 21) stated that they were secretly helping the movement. His statement derives strong support from the issue of *Nishkalanka* (the official organ of the Catholics) of October 1947. On the front page of it, there is the picture of the Madonna with the child and facing her is the map of Chhota Nagpur. At page 148, there is given the explanation of the picture in these words." (The text of the explanation in the original Hindi is given followed by the English translation by the Niyogi Committee):

"When will the Ranchi Holy Land be dedicated to the Mother Maria.

"Oh,—the Queen of Chotta Nagpur, by your grace Christ-King entered this land with splendour and established his residence here. Oh, thou Virgin of the Resurrection, at this moment, when false prophets are trying to appropriate Chotta Nagpur, enter the kingdom with triumph and invite the Hindus (unconverted), Lutherans, Anglicans and others to be with you and your son" (N.R., p. 51).

Rameshwar Prasad Sharma, who professes to have done detective work, made a mischievous statement seriously incriminating the Catholic priests and even Bishop Sevrin of Ranchi in the course of his deposition before the Niyogi Committee at Jaspur in November 1955 (N.R., II-B, pp. 140-141). Instead of verifying the statement locally, especially from the responsible persons who were accused by Sharma, the Committee seeks support for it from the *Nishkalanka*.

Regarding the translation it must be noted that *Ranchi Dharma Prant* simply means the "Diocese of Ranchi"—that territory whose Catholic inhabitants are under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ranchi in matters of religion and morals. It has not the slightest political connotation. Any local Catholic also understands the word "sansar" to mean a "non-Christian

animist" and not a "Hindu (unconverted)". The correct translation of "teri Prathna dwara" is "through your prayers". The Niyogi Committee's rendition "by your grace" is a complete distortion of the Catholic religious concept regarding Mary. And finally, the entire prayer says no more than the Lord's prayer when it states, "Thy kingdom come . . .", and Christ Himself said clearly when questioned by Pilate, the Roman Governor (who also had some suspicion that Christ's mission might be a political one):

"My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world my followers would have thought that I might not be delivered to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from here" (St. John, XVIII, 36).

The next quotation from *Nishkalanka* is even more distorted than the first. It is wrongly translated, truncated and tampered with. To prove the danger of denationalisation in Christianity the Committee gives a translation from *Nishkalanka*. It is about Goa:

"Why does India desire that Portugal which has been exercising sovereignty for 400 years over Goa should surrender it? The fact is that a large majority of residents of Goa are quite contented with their present position. Only a handful of Goans resident in Goa and in India are shouting for the merger of Goa with India. This attitude is not justified and those who are following this course are giving unrighteous lead to India" (N.R., p. 126).

This may be compared with the translation of the complete text from *Nishkalanka*, August 15, 1955, pp. 124-125:

"The fact that this tiny province of India is still under the authority of Portugal is like a wart on the fair face of Mother India. It is understandable why India wants that Portugal which has been exercising sovereignty for 400 years over it, should now surrender it. It is a matter of feeling. Meanwhile it appears to be a fact that a majority of residents in Goa are quite contented with their present condition. Only a handful of Goans residing in Goa and in India are shouting for the merger of Goa with India. Their statements and wishes are being forcefully broadcast in the newspapers of India and attempts are being made to create the opinion that Goans desire that the Portuguese quit Goa. It would seem that this course is not the right one and those who follow it are doing an injury to Mother India."

It is obvious that the Report has omitted some important passages from the original text which qualify the statement; and

on a comparison between the two quotations it is difficult not to infer that the distortion is deliberate. Besides, this is an individual opinion, with which it is unfair to indict the whole community.

Panikkar, K. M., *Asia and Western Dominance*.

The Niyogi Committee has found a congenial source book in Panikkar. The book is noted for its half-truths and bold assertions. In it there is a clear declaration of hostility towards Europeans, and this leads the author to misinterpret facts according to his preconceived notions. The whole indictment of Catholic missions in the East, contained in the book, betrays a travesty of historical truth. (For a fuller treatment of this point on historical grounds cf. Rev. P. M. D'Elia, *La Civiltà Catholica*, 1955, IV, pp. 49ff.; Albert Beguin, *Esprit*, December 1955, pp. 1809ff.; Bishop Raymond, *Examiner*, June 16, 1956, p. 305.)

Not content with the highly prejudiced version of historical truth in *Asia and Western Dominance*, the Niyogi Report has deemed it necessary to add a few more of its own.

Thus we find, "As pointed out by Shri K. M. Panikkar in his book 'Asia and Western Dominance', the coming of the Portuguese in India marks the advent of Christianity on Indian soil" (N.R., p. 65). Two mistakes are evident in this single passage. First, Panikkar does not point out that the coming of the Portuguese in India marks the advent of Christianity on Indian soil; Panikkar considers it as "the next stage of Christian activity" (Panikkar, p. 381). Secondly, the Niyogi Report states in another place that Christianity had already been in India "between the fifth and the ninth centuries" when the "Nestorian traders brought to Malabar several colonies of Christians from Persian lands . . ." (N.R., p. 35). Thus the Report denies on page 65 what it has already asserted on page 35.

With regard to missionary enterprise under the Portuguese the Report wishes to prove that St. Francis Xavier tried to involve the secular arm of the state in his work of evangelization. (N.R., p. 65). Yet, as a rule, Panikkar holds that it was the state which made use of religion and not vice versa. It must be further noted that Xavier's letter quoted in the Report is out of context in *Asia and Western Dominance*, and as quoted by Panikkar the text is not a translation of St. Francis Xavier's writing but a completely distorted summary of the original, as are other letters alluded to (cf. Brodrick, *Life of St. Francis Xavier*, pp. 305-307).

The Report paraphrases Panikkar to show that there was

a setback to Christian activities when the Protestant nations began their commercial enterprise, and quotes:

"The European nations that followed the Portuguese in Indian Ocean were interested solely in trade, and as they were organised as commercial corporations, the question of converting the heathens was of no significance to them" (N.R., p. 66).

But what follows in Panikkar, but is omitted in the Report, is significant:

"The Portuguese, on the other hand, looked upon the furtherance of Christian religion as an essential part of their work in the East and as a mission entrusted to them by the Holy See." (Therefore the preachers did not directly work for the crown.)

At the end of the paragraph in the Report it is stated, "Consequently there was a lull in the Christian missionary activities"; but in Panikkar the text runs thus: "The first phase may be said to have come to an end." Neither statement is correct.

Finally, it may be interesting to note that the Report stops paraphrasing Panikkar just one paragraph before the end of the chapter. Here is the paragraph just for record:

"The Catholic Missionaries, during the period of Portuguese leadership, had some notable achievements to their credit, which may also be mentioned here. An early Jesuit priest, Father Estavo—he was an Englishman from Wiltshire by the name of Stephens—mastered the Indian languages, studied Sanscrit and wrote a lengthy epic poem in Marathi on the Life of Christ. The first printing press in India was set up by Jesuit priests in Goa. They also founded some seminaries which, though meant for the education of priests, seem to have devoted some attention to the study of Indian languages. At the college of Amba Lakkad, near Cochin, Sanscrit and Tamil were taught. It is also claimed that a Spanish lay brother, Gonsalvez, cut the first Tamil type. It is conceivable, that but for the intervention of the Dutch, the Catholic missionaries, with decreasing prospects of proselytization, might have turned their activities to cultural channels, but this opportunity was not given them" (Panikkar, p. 386).

The climax is reached in the final quotations from Panikkar. Two different quotations are put together in the Report, and it jumps fifty pages in Panikkar from the thirteenth century in Karakonum with the great Khan to the nineteenth century China within the French zone of influence. The paragraph in the Report runs thus:

"When Carpini was sent to China in the 13th century apparently to expound to the heathen the truth of Christianity, he went in reality on a Mission of Espionage, an instance of religion being used for political purposes (*Asia and Western Dominance*, pp. 376-77). Writing about missionary activities in China even the missionary historian Latourette had to point out that 'the Church had become a partner in Western Imperialism' (p. 425 *ibid*)". (N.R., p. 148.)

With regard to the first quotation in the paragraph reference may be made to the *Histoire de L'Eglise*, Vol. 10: "La Chretienté Romaine", p. 286, to understand that the Pope entrusted a Bull to Carpini to exhort the Mongols to put an end to plundering and onslaught and bring about peace. This event is interpreted by Panikkar as a "mission of espionage", and in the Report it appears in capital letters.

The second part of the paragraph is a quotation from Panikkar which in turn is a quotation from Latourette, an anti-Catholic writer. The Report does not indicate that Latourette speaks of the nineteenth century, with the result that a casual reader may have the impression that the Report speaks of missionary activities in China during a single unbroken period.

Parekh, M. C., *Christian Proselytism in India*.

The object of the book is clear from the Preface where it is stated: "This book is written to show the super-imperialistic character of Christian missions." Its anti-Christian prejudice is clear from the sub-title, *A Great and Growing Menace*. The object and the views of the author are identified with those of the Niyogi Committee. The book is quoted in the Report as an authority no less than five times.

Pickett, J. W., *Christian Mass Movements in India*.

This is a survey of the Protestant centres of mass conversions in India planned and financed by the International Missionary Council. Dr. Pickett was the Director of the Mass Movement Study, National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon. The author has made an excellent study of the Protestant missions, but shows a strong prejudice against the Catholics.

To prove that conversions to Christianity are prompted by considerations of material gain the Niyogi Report quotes Pickett thus:

"Christian Missions have added to the wealth of India by the large sums of money which they imported from foreign

lands. . . . This economic benefits have come to many participants in Christian mass movement. . . . This is not a fact that need be hidden or discussed in whispers. Considering how Jesus tried to meet the needs of the poor, healing diseases and other afflictions, feeding the hungry, etc." (N.R., p. 101).

The quotation is incomplete. The Report puts together sentences from two distinct topics, cleverly omitting at the same time Pickett's remark that "hundreds of men and women who do not profess the Christian religion bear grateful witness to help received from Christian institutions or individuals". Further, the author, far from admitting that material gain has been the predominant motive for conversions, rather tries to prove that the opposite is true. This point is specially discussed in chapter VII of the book, but the Niyogi Committee does not refer to it. Finally the passage in Pickett which follows the quotation given in the Report may be given here:

"The mere profession of the Christian Faith has never lifted anyone out of poverty . . . conflicts have very often followed conversion resulting in the loss of work, destruction of property, withdrawal of credit, or in court cases."

The Report uses Pickett again to accuse Roman Catholics of having converted Lutherans in Chhota Nagpur by financial inducements (N.R., p. 114). But this is a charge levelled by a Protestant against Catholics. It is not the result of information received from Catholic converts. Further, the quotation itself is incomplete. For the falling away of the Lutherans the Report mentions only two reasons given by Pickett: "Discipline by the church or by the tribal brotherhood, and (in the case of Roman Catholics only) financial assistance." But two more given in Pickett are omitted in the Report: Preference for the other church, and discouragement over Lutheran difficulties resulting from the repatriation of the missionaries during the Great War and loss of financial subsidies.

To substantiate the charge that "a Christian convert changes his dress and assumes the airs of foreigners", made by Gunwant Arjun Tayade, a member of the Harijan Samaj of Amraoti in the course of his evidence at the place (N.R., II-B, p. 218), and believed by the Niyogi Committee, Pickett is quoted for confirmation (N.R., p. 126). But the Report fails to mention the fact that the author by no means considers the tendency of westernisation and the contemptuous attitude towards Indian traditions as the direct aim or necessary result of conversion. He rather looks upon it as an unfortunate turn in Christians ". . . whose conversion has involved a break with

relatives and caste or community associates" (Pickett, p. 332). Furthermore he ranks the minimising of this danger among the major values of mass conversions. "The church of the villages," he says, "which is predominantly the church of the mass movement, is thoroughly Indian in social patterns and customs" (Pickett, p. 332).

Richter, Julius D. D., *The History of the Christian Missions in India*.

The book is quoted in the Report nine times. The author has much praise for Anglo-Saxon and German Protestant missions, but for the Catholic Church, and in particular for the Jesuits, he has only words of condemnation. The Niyogi Committee could have perceived the extreme bias of this work had it approached the subject with an open mind. Charges levelled against the Church and the Society of Jesus have been refuted in any number of history books. Common sense demands that when considering partisan views a scholar should read the other side of the case and come to a balanced judgment. But not so the Niyogi Committee. On the highly controversial subject of Robert de Nobili's method of conversion the Report relies on Richter's biased Protestant account (N.R., p. 37) and ignores well-known works of Catholics such as the *Light of the East*, 1924, "Sanyasi from the West", and Dahmen, *Un Jesuit Brahme*, Burges, Ch. Beyaert, 1925.

At another place the Report quotes Richter to show that during the Rising of 1857 the missionaries of Chhota Nagpur offered 10,000 armed Kols to help the foreigners (N.R., p. 145), forgetting that earlier in the Report it was stated that conversions to Christianity among the Kols had risen from 31 in 1851 to 2,400 in 1861 (N.R., p. 42). Where did the 10,000 armed Christian Kols come from in 1857 if there were only 2,400 in 1861? The exact quotation from Richter, without reference to page number, is given in R. K. Deshpande's statement (N.R., II-A, p. 335), which appears to have influenced the Committee.

Saquet, J., S.J., *Catholic Dharma Pracharak*.

Passages from this book are quoted in the Report in the original Hindi with a translation in English, in order to prove the contention that schools are the means for conversion. The translation in the Report reads, "... the school produces good Christians". The exact translation should be, "the people become *good* Christians". *Produces* would imply conversion, and that is how it is understood in the Report, but the author

means that Catholic children become devout Christians. This is evident from the context, since the chapter deals with Catholic children, and the author explains in the next sentence of the disputed passage: "a 'devout Christian' is one who learns his religion properly and lives up to it" (Saquet, p. 60).

Speer, R. E., *Missionary Principles and Practice*.

In tracing the history of the Anglican missions the Report quotes the statement of Lord Halifax (Secretary of State for India in 1859) from Speer:

"Every additional Christian is an additional bond of the union with this country and additional source of strength to the Empire" (N.R., p. 40).

But the Report mutilates the sentence by deleting the first clause: "Independently of Christian considerations I believe that . . ."; and then the above quotation should follow. The meaning is now obvious: Lord Halifax was concerned with the political and not religious considerations. And what is more, the Report fails to notice that Speer quoted Halifax to refute and not to support his idea, for he goes on:

"But the Missionaries are not political propagandists. They do not go out for the purpose of turning monarchies into republics, far less to turn independent states into dependencies upon European or American Governments" (Speer, p. 29).

Another passage is quoted from Speer wrongly and out of context in the Report, to prove the sweeping statement that "Missions to foreign fields had not always been regarded as the immediate duty of the Church" (N.R., p. 148). The passage relates to a statement of Dr. Hamilton taken from Speer:

"Even as late as 1796 Dr. Hamilton declared in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that to spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel among the heathen nations *was highly romantic and visionary*" (N.R., p. 148). The last few words are italicised to show that they substitute "seems to me highly preposterous" which are found in the original.

Had the Niyogi Committee continued to read a few lines more from Speer it would have found that Speer refutes Hamilton's statement:

"And there are men today who, on Hamilton's ground, or on grounds of their own, endeavour to escape the searching swing of the last command of Christ and the missionary-exaction of the expansive and universal genius of Christianity" (Speer, p. 18).

Wilkie, Wendell, L., *One World*.

On the authority of this book the Report states:

"In the conflict between Communism and Democracy combined with the Church, America is taking the lead as indicated by Wendell Wilkie in his *One World*" (N.R., p. 58).

But nowhere in the book is this indicated.

Woodroffe, Sir John, *Is India Civilized?*

To illustrate the alleged Christian preaching against Hinduism the Report gives a quotation from Woodroffe:

"Similarly a journalist, Mr. Harold Begbie, in a work 'The Light of Asia', published by the Christian Literature Society for India, speaks of Hinduism as 'A weltering chaos of terror, darkness and uncertainty. It is a religion without an apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, without a religious sanction in the sphere of morals, without a moral code, without a God, except a being which is a mixture of Bachhus, Don Juan and Dick Turpin. It is the most material and childish superstitious animalism that ever masqueraded as idealism, not another path to God but another pit to abomination, as far set from God as the mind of man can go . . .'" (N.R., p. 121).

Nowhere does the Report mention the fact that this passage was quoted by Woodroffe *in order to refute it*. Woodroffe is well disposed towards India and its culture and takes a sympathetic attitude in interpreting Indian thought. This book, *Is India Civilized?* is written by him as an answer to a book by William Archer, *India and the Future*, wherein it is stated that India as a whole is in a state of barbarism.

It is unfortunate that there are some books in existence, such as, Mayo's *Mother India*, Begbie's *The Light of Asia*, Archer's *India and the Future* and above all the *Niyogi Report* itself which are detrimental to India's prestige and offensive to the religions and the religious communities of our country. But there are many more good, wise and respectable books which are written with a sense of responsibility and understanding, which redound to the credit of India and which help to develop the minds of our citizens in the right direction.

The World Christian Handbook (1952).

This is a Protestant book, referred to in the Report fifteen times chiefly in the chapters entitled *Christian Post-War World Policy*, and *Recommendations with Reasons*.

The aim of the Report in quoting this handbook is to

create the false impression of a Christian movement of world domination by wrongly linking religion with politics.

The World Mission of the Church—A Report of the World Conference held at Tambaram in 1938.

This book deals with the Ecumenical Movements of the Protestant churches. The Niyogi Committee's reaction to these movements is so strong that it seems to have developed into a pathological obsession. The symptoms of the disease may be noticed in the following sections in the Report:

Attitude and Activities of the Ecumenical Movement (p. 141).

Ecumenical attitude towards Christian India (p. 143).

Attempt to alienate the Indian Christian Community (p. 144).

Danger of Foreign Control During Crisis (p. 145).

If this great 'plot' of the Ecumenical Movements to gain "Control during a Crisis" were so real, it would be naturally expected that the handbooks of the movement should be widely diffused throughout India in the libraries of individuals and institutions. Yet it is only after visiting over twelve libraries that a single copy of *The World Mission of the Church* was found, and many of its pages had not yet been cut. And in three of the largest cities of India the Ecumenical books listed in the Bibliography of the Niyogi Report, viz. *The Ecumenical Studies*, 1954 (issued by the World Council of Churches), *The Elements of Ecumenism*, and *The National Christian Council Review*, 1954-55, could not be found.

The World Mission of the Church is quoted five times in the Niyogi Report, and of these quotations, three are out of context. One of them is given here together with the original. Comparison may be made, and no comment is necessary:

"Recognising that Christ came to open to all the way of life abundant, but that the way for millions is blocked by poverty, war, racial hatred, exploitation and cruel injustice, the Church is called to attack social evils at their roots. It must seek to open the eyes of its members to their implication in uncertain practices. Those who suffer from bitter wrong, it is constrained to succour and console, while it strikes courageously and persistently for the creation of a more just society" (*The World Mission of the Church*, p. 19).

The following rendering of the original, quoted above, appears in the Niyogi Report:

"The activity accordingly turned to *the under-privileged*

classes whose way to life abundant is blocked by poverty. These people would be incapable of receiving the Christian message in their ignorance and degradation until they are freed from the *bondage and degradation in which they are kept by their heathen overlords* (p. 126, Missions in Rural India, Tambaram Report, p. 19, Spontaneous expansion of the Church, p. 112). The Evangelist therefore came forward with financial help for raising their standard of life and gathering them into the Church" (N.R., p. 56).

Not all the sources mentioned in the Bibliography, and those not so mentioned, nor all the references made in the Report, have been noticed in this Chapter. But the important books reviewed here, thirty in number, are sufficient to show why the Committee chose them, and how it made use of them. The Committee has not only betrayed its ignorance of historical method, and its incompetence to write history, which was at any rate unnecessary for the purpose of its enquiry, but it has exposed its deliberate intention to malign and discredit Christianity. In its method of collecting and utilising its oral and written evidence it has shown its prejudice and partisan spirit even more clearly. Violating the traditions of impartiality, justice and fairplay followed by public Commissions in this country in the past, it has produced a report, blackest on record on this side of the Iron Curtain. That such a report should have been drawn up in a country which has glorious traditions of religious toleration and which has established one of the finest secular States in the world, is a national disgrace; that such a report might have been circulated and read in other countries is a national humiliation.

CHRISTIANITY AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

By

M. RUTHNASWAMY

"It appears to us that the missionary strategy is to detach the Christian Indian from his nation," is one of the charges levelled against Christian missionaries in India by the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee in their Report (p. 145). As if surprised at the enormity of this charge they immediately try to water it down when they go on to say in their very next sentence that "it may well be a suspicion but it is strengthened by certain views expressed by prominent persons". What are these expressions by which their initial suspicion has been strengthened? "As one reads missionary literature," they say, "one comes across such expressions as 'colony of heaven', 'in the country but not of the country', 'historical community of the redeemed'." All these, according to them "smack of extraterritoriality which figured so prominently in Chinese Treaties".

I wonder if the members of the Committee remembered what extraterritoriality meant and involved in China and elsewhere. These Treaties allowed European Powers jurisdiction over their subjects in certain defined areas of China and allowed them to establish courts, generally the courts of consuls of their own, for the trial of cases in which their subjects were involved. Surely, Christians in India have never claimed and have never been granted, and never have enjoyed such immunities and privileges. It is surprising that a Committee headed by a former judge of a High Court should have used the word "extraterritoriality" to describe the position or even the claims made of Christians. The phrases "colony of heaven" and "historical community of the redeemed" at which the Committee have taken alarm are used to describe a spiritual fellowship and have nothing to do with the assertion of special political privileges. Even the phrase "in the country but not of the

country", unfortunately worded as it is, like the common phrase used in Christian literature, "in the world, but not of the world", is really meant to stress the spiritual or other-worldly aspirations of true Christians. It bears no political or anti-national connotation.

Political Motive

The conversion to Christianity of large numbers of the aboriginal tribes and the depressed classes in recent times has led the Committee to suspect a political motive in this movement. They go to the Simon Commission of 25 years ago for support. The Simon Commission had recommended the exclusion of the aboriginal areas from the jurisdiction of the newly constituted popular provincial Governments, apparently for the purpose of according to these people special protection so as to facilitate their advance as quickly as possible to the level of the population as a whole. The Missionaries, say the Committee (p. 137), "came forward to take advantage of the provision recommended by the Simon Commission with a scheme for proselytisation of the rural and aboriginal people". But missionary activity among the rural and aboriginal people preceded the Simon Commission by at least 75 years. The Lutherans had worked among the aboriginals of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar since 1842. The Catholic Missionary movement among them began in 1862. But it was with the coming of Fr. Lievens in 1885 that the conversion of these people on a large scale began. And reading the accounts of these early missionaries among the aborigines of Chota Nagpur it looked as if they had come to save their bodies rather than their souls.* For the aboriginal people were in the grip of zamindars and their agents, collectors of rents and taxes, coolie recruiting agents of the tea plantations of Assam, money-lenders and petty police officials. Fr. Lievens set himself to study the agrarian laws and customs under which they groaned, the rights of the zamindars and the limits and limitations of those rights. He first set about instructing the aboriginal peasants and tenants in their rights and their duties, and showed them how to win their cases against their oppressors. He dispensed medicines to the sick and established schools for the children. The social and legal and economic relief that he brought drew the people

* For an account of the missionary activities among these aboriginal tribes see *Oraons and Mundas* by Das—the Hindu anthropologist.

to him. Village after village, having heard of the success of his intervention in the courts on behalf of the oppressed, came to him for help and to join the company of those he had helped. Living in villages as village communities they came to be converted to Christianity as communities. That is how the impression of mass-conversion got abroad, to which the Niyogi Committee in its turn has so easily succumbed. Any movement among a village-community, like that of the aborigines, to succeed must proceed as a village-community movement. And Fr. Lievens welcomed the coming of the aborigines into Christianity in and as whole village groups or communities. It kept them together in the new religion, made marriage and mutual assistance easy, and promoted communal unity and solidarity. And it is they who came to Fr. Lievens—Fr. Lievens did not go after them. But if they came together and were instructed together, each had to learn the catechism and the prayers individually before he was baptised. It was only after each man or woman of a village received this preliminary instruction that the whole village community was admitted into the Christian fold. They came to the missionaries as villages, but were converted as individuals.

It was not because and after provision was made for special treatment of the aborigines in the Government of India Act of 1935 based on the Report of the Simon Commission, but when the Christian missionaries found 75 years ago whole village communities in poverty, oppression, and helplessness and when no native organisation had gone to their help, that Christian missionaries stepped in. And if these aboriginal people seeing the works of charity and mercy of the missionaries wished to join a religion which could impel men not of their race or country to help them in their helplessness, were the missionaries to say them nay? And they were so amenable to conversion. Simple primitives, unfettered by the caste system, kept outside the traditions and customs of the rest of their countrymen, they suffered from none of the inhibitions that made the orthodox Hindus allergic to Christianity. Neglected and forgotten by Hindus for centuries, are they to be blamed or, for that matter, are Christian missionaries to be blamed if they came in their thousands to be incorporated in a religious body which offered them a new faith, a new life, a new confidence in themselves and their future?

Anti-National Stand

However that might be, contends the Niyogi Committee, these pockets of Christian converts from the aboriginal tribes had taken up anti-national attitudes. They go as far back as 1857 to find evidence for this charge. Did not the missionaries of Chota Nagpur offer 10,000 armed Kols and a battalion of Karens during the Sepoy Mutiny? It may be mentioned that Catholics are not involved in the charge, since Catholic missions here are of much later date. This apart, the Committee seem to forget that other communities also came to the aid of the British to suppress that Mutiny. According to Dr. Tara Chand's History of India,* the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, and the Indian States actively opposed it and fought for the British. And it is his opinion that "it was not a general revolt on the part of the Indian people, for they had not yet acquired the sense of unity; it was confined to soldiers, landlords and princes—the representatives of a dying system".

Coming to modern times they say that the recent hostile attitude of the Karens and the Nagas, point in the same "direction". And the Jarkhand movement among the tribes of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar is added to make up the full measure of their indictment of Christian converts from the tribes for anti-national and unpatriotic conduct. But all these movements were general tribal movements in which Christians have joined with non-Christians. *They are tribal movements, not Christian movements.* They are reactions of the tribes against the prospect of being absorbed in States and Societies in which they will form a minority and in which their interests are liable to be neglected by the majority who will form the governments of those States. The tribal communities that still remain in a tribal condition on account of their social and economic backwardness, in view of their suspicion and distrust of more civilised communities, have to be handled with gentleness, sympathy and consideration for their culture and traditions. They require special treatment. They must be placed under the Central Government from which they would expect a better deal than from the Governments of the States in which they have been placed. They must have a feeling of autonomy, which special treatment and special political system will give them. This is what they mean by the claim to independence. If the promise of the Prime Minister in September last to

* *A Short History of the Indian People* by Tara Chand, former Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University, later Indian Ambassador at Tcheran.

certain leaders of the Nagas that the Government of India would deal directly with the Nagas and would consider favourable suggestions for a greater autonomy for the tribal area were incorporated in an official announcement, the solution of the Naga problem might be in sight. That is the way to deal with these tribal movements, and not by denouncing them as anti-national which is the Niyogi Committee's way.

As for the Jarkhand movement, it is a general movement headed by non-Christians; it is not a Christian movement. Catholic ecclesiastical authorities in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar have stated more than once that they would neither support it nor condemn it, for the simple reason that as ecclesiastics they would not intervene in purely secular politics. And for people like the members of the Niyogi Committee who in other contexts or in other circumstances would clamour that bishops and priests keep their hands off politics, to condemn Catholic bishops and priests for not condemning the Jarkhand movement shows them to be illogical and disingenuous. In all the arguments used by the States Reorganisation Commission against the formation of Jarkhand as a State, there is no reference at all to Christians as forming a prominent section of the Jarkhand party.

Missions and Politics

However you may try to interpret the present attitude of missionaries to Indian State and Society, argue the Committee, the whole history of Christian Missionaries shows that they had political motives and political results. It is quite easy to see a political colour in Christian missionaries because the colour lies on the surface. Missionary activity in the first place was contemporary with political events. Missionary activities in Asia Minor followed the Crusades; the maritime discoveries in North America and Asia were followed by missionary activities there. But it is a question of dates. Who went first to these parts of the world, the politician or the missionaries? In North America it was the conquistadores that went first and opened the new countries of the western hemisphere to the Christian missionaries. In Asia it was the Portuguese navigators and governors that showed the way to the modern missionary to India and China and Japan. Similarly Protestant missionaries followed in the wake of the East India Company. Far from the Christian missionaries being supported and advanced by the Spanish and Portuguese rulers of these new territories, they

were a nuisance to their political masters. The Niyogi Committee states "that St. Francis Xavier enlisted the support of the Portuguese rulers in order to effect conversions". It is true that Francis Xavier took advantage of the protection offered by Portuguese rulers to travel in the country in order to advance his work of conversion. When he found his famous Paravar converts on the Fishery coast harassed by the Badagas from the hills he placed them under the protection of the Portuguese government and army. But to interpret this act of necessity as enlisting the support of the Portuguese in the work of conversion is to misinterpret his act. A Spaniard himself, a Jesuit and a holy man, it was all he could do to keep the Portuguese on the straight and strict path of Christian duty. From the day he landed in Goa on 6th May 1542 he deplored the low state of morality among the Portuguese rulers which he considered one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of the Christian faith in the country. In their turn the Portuguese officials and soldiers looked upon the missionaries as unwanted moral censors and as obstacles to their brutal treatment of their native subjects. They did not like to be accused of their practice of concubinage and prostitution, and the use of slave labour in which the Portuguese indulged.

Portuguese authority did not extend beyond Goa and the west coast south of Goa. But the early missionaries ventured far beyond Goa and the West. They went as far as Tanjore, Madurai and Madras in the south, the kingdom of Vijayanagar in the Deccan, Chittagong in Bengal, Agra and Lahore in the north. And everywhere they went, they carried on their missionary work with the protection of the rulers of the territories concerned—Rajah, Nawab or Moghul emperor. The Committee who say that St. Francis Xavier and the early missionaries enlisted the support of the Portuguese government because they wanted the peace and security that government ensured, might as well have gone on to say that they enlisted the support of the Rajahs, the Nawabs and the Moghul emperors in whose territories they were allowed to work.

The Committee goes on to cite the case of Carpini in China, described by Sardar K. M. Panikkar in his "Asia and the Western Dominance", and the charge that in Japan missionaries were used for political purposes and the report of the Abbe Dubois that the "Hindus soon found that the missionaries were in fact nothing else but disguised foreigners who had of late invaded their country". Carpini was a Franciscan Friar of the 13th century who was sent by the Pope and the Council

of Lyons in 1245 to negotiate with Mongol commanders with a view to saving Christendom from further conquests. He was sent not as missionary but as ambassador. And if Friar Carpini in his work as ambassador of the Pope sought to get information about the Mongols, about their strength and resources, should it be described as a mission of espionage, as Sardar Panikkar described it? Should Sardar Panikkar be described as having been on "a mission of espionage" because he sent those reports on the formation and prospects of the People's Republic of China which have gone towards the making of the Prime Minister's policy towards China? It is what every ambassador does, sending faithful reports of what he sees and hears in the country to which he is accredited. Anyhow Friar Carpini did not go out to the Mongols as a missionary, and Sardar Panikkar's attempt to attribute political work to the Christian missionary should not have requisitioned medieval friars for his thesis. As for the charge that in Japan missionaries were used for political purposes owing to the conversion of some feudal lords in the disunited Japan of the 17th century, it is worth noting that the feudal anarchy was there before the missionaries came on the scene. Because they converted some of these feudal lords, the war against the moribund central authority cannot be attributed to them. And as for the Abbé Dubois' report that the "Hindus soon found that the missionaries were in fact nothing else but disguised foreigners who had of late invaded their country", the Abbé was only reporting the impression made on the Hindus of his neighbourhood who could not distinguish between Frenchman and Englishman, between priest and soldier and who were easy victims of the *post hoc, propter hoc* fallacy. From these doubtful assertions to argue that the Christian missionaries in India have everywhere and always been engaged in political work in the garb of missionaries is to substitute prejudice for fact.

Theocratic State

Against the Catholic Church in particular, the Committee levels the charge that the "Universal Church is a theocratic State" (p. 150). Just a bald statement without any facts or arguments to support the sweeping charge! For it would imply that the Catholic Church has been, is and will be a theocratic State. One wonders whether the members of the Committee know what a theocratic State is and what it implies. A theocracy has been defined "as a government exercised in

the name of God by men who speak in His name and pass for His ministers, in other words by a sacerdotal caste".* It is a system where according to Lord Acton "political and religious obligations are made to coincide, as in the old Jewish State". The Catholic Church is a spiritual institution, not a secular polity. Its origin is spiritual, its ends are spiritual, and the means it uses for attaining its spiritual ends are spiritual. Its success is no doubt to a great extent due to the excellence of its organisation. The Catholic Church is not a secular State. It is only a secular State governed like a religious organisation that can be called a theocratic State. Even the State that the Papacy of Rome governed for about 1,000 years could not be called a theocracy, for it was not governed like a religious organisation. It was a secular State governed by ecclesiastics according to the principle and practices of secular States. It was called the Temporal Power of the Papacy to distinguish it from the spiritual power of the Church. With that temporal power gone except for the exiguous sovereignty of the Vatican State which it has been given as a symbolic protection and representation of its spiritual power rather than as an expression of any political authority, the Papacy stands and acts as the spiritual head of a spiritual institution.

Double Allegiance

Not only Catholics but Christians of all denominations have to meet the charge of the Committee that they are torn between two loyalties—loyalty to the State and loyalty to Christianity. They take a statement from the National Church Council Review of April 1955, "When there is a conflict of loyalty between Church and country, the true Christian has necessarily to choose obedience to Christ" as the provocation for their view on the political loyalty of Christians. The only reaction of the Committee to this categorical statement is to wonder (p. 145) "whether the Americans would accept this interpretation of the duty of a Christian in America". The wonder is rather naive, for the ready answer to this rhetorical question is that this preference of Christ to country is as obvious to Christians in America as to Christians elsewhere. It is simply not true that in other countries the loyalty between Christ and country is not divided—as the Committee allege (p. 147). This fact of "divided loyalty" is as old as Christianity itself. It arose from Christ's definition of the rule of Christian

* Block—*Dictionnaire de la Politique*, Vol. II.

political behaviour in the celebrated direction: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. The question was raised for the Apostles when they chose Christ's inclusiveness in preference to Jewish exclusiveness. It was raised in the Roman empire when the Christians refused to worship the Roman emperor as a god. St. Augustine placed the limits of obedience to the State in the higher duty of obedience to the laws of God and His Church. And these laws of God and of His Church lie within the field of faith and morals.

The question of the conflict of loyalties was raised again in European history when the coming of Protestantism produced minorities of Catholics in Protestant States and of Protestants in Catholic States. On both these minorities the duty was laid of obedience to the laws of God as each conceived them rather than the decrees of the ruling Government if these should come into conflict. The classic instance of this kind of non-conformity was presented by the decision of Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of Henry VIII, who, called upon to subscribe to the oaths of allegiance under the Act of Supremacy, preferred to obey the law of the Church and died on the scaffold for his preference. His saying "I am the king's good servant but God's first" has been the guiding principle of the political behaviour of Catholic citizens ever since.

In the more peaceful times of the 19th century this question of Catholic loyalty was raised in England at the time of the Vatican Decrees of 1870 and in the days of the Kulturkampf in Germany in the regime of Bismarck. The proclamation of the Infallibility of the Pope, i.e. that on questions of faith and morals, the pronouncements of the Pope, made in the conditions and according to the rules prescribed for such pronouncements were binding on the conscience and behaviour of Catholics, roused the famous English statesman Gladstone to question the political loyalty of Catholics. How could English Catholics, he asked in *Letters to the Times*, be expected to be loyal if they were bound by loyalty to an outside power? The Vatican Decree on Infallibility, he argued, was inconsistent with civil allegiance. He was answered by Newman in his "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk", where he argued that it was only in the limited region of faith and morals that Catholics owed a superior loyalty to the Pope and that in actual practice Catholics were in the past and could in the present time be as loyal as any other class of citizens. Newman starts off his reply to Gladstone with the reminder that Gladstone's suspicion

of the Church is nothing new. "When indeed," he asks, "was it in ancient times that the State did not show jealousy of the Church?" "Go through the long annals of Church history," he adjures his opponent, "century after century and say was there ever a time when her Bishops and notably the Bishops of Rome were slow to give their testimony on behalf of the moral and revealed law and to suffer for their obedience to it?" "For, the history surely of the Church in all past times ancient as well as medieval is the very embodiment of that tradition of apostolic independence and freedom of speech which in the eyes of men is her great offence now."

After tracing the history of the Church and of the control exercised by the Papacy over kings and emperors in the Middle Ages, Newman explains the conditions under which this control is exercised in modern times. He shows how Pope Pius IX, against whom Gladstone fulminated, lays down the conditions on which the Pope exercises the right. They are:

- (1) he exercises this right only over Governments and individuals over whom he has jurisdiction, not against non-Catholic Governments and peoples;
- (2) it can only be exercised in rare and critical circumstances;
- (3) the decision must come as from a tribunal; his prerogative is not a mere arbitrary power but must be exercised by a process of law and a formal examination of the case and in the presence and hearing of the two parties concerned;
- (4) the Pope's decision involves an appeal to the supreme standard of right and wrong, the moral law as the basis and rule, and must contain the definite reason on which it decides in favour of one party or the other;
- (5) the Pope is not infallible in the exercise of this right, such a notion the Pope himself calls a "malicious" charge, an invention of the enemy.

Obedience to Conscience

While the relations between the Pope, representing the Church, and the State are subject to these conditions, over Catholicism in all times and places the Pope has direct and supreme jurisdiction in all matters of faith and morals. As many, if not most, political questions have a moral side and bearing, the Pope cannot keep aloof from such questions in so far as they involve a moral issue. The question thus arises of

divided allegiance of Catholics over which Mr. Gladstone about 75 years ago and the Niyogi Committee today are anxious. But even this jurisdiction of the Pope over Catholics in temporal matters is, according to Newman, subject to certain conditions for its exercise. First of these conditions is that supreme direction does not mean minute direction. The Pope lays down general principles of action not detailed and particular suggestions as to conduct. *And always the direction must be in the field of faith and morals.* Newman quotes theologians like Cardinals Terracota and Bellarmine who mention occasions when Catholics should obey conscience rather than the Pope.

Absolute obedience in all matters, Newman concludes, is owed neither to Church nor State. And he ends his argument with a statement of the jurisdiction of Conscience in public affairs which would not be out of place at a time when public affairs are the main concern of free and independent India. The rule and measure of duty, teaches Newman, is not utility nor expedience, nor the happiness of the greatest number, nor State convenience, nor fitness, order and the *pulchrum*. Conscience is not long-sighted selfishness, nor a desire to be consistent with oneself; but it is a messenger from Him, who both in nature and in grace speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules by his representative. Conscience is the aboriginal vicar of Christ, a prophet in its information, a monarch in its peremptoriness, a priest in its blessings and anathemas, and even though the eternal priesthood throughout the Church should cease to be, it, i.e. Conscience, the sacred principle would remain and would have a sway.

The Catholic attitude in this matter has been pithily summed up by the Irish patriot Daniel O'Connell: "I take my religion from Rome, my politics from home."

Right to Freedom

Lord Acton, the great Catholic historian, who is coming into his own in non-Catholic historical circles,* proved from his unsurpassed knowledge of history that Papal Infallibility and the Syllabus of Modern Errors denounced by Pope Pius IX did not do more than the Canon Law and the Lateran Decrees, than Innocent III and St. Thomas "and that Catholics who remained loyal to their States and Governments before Papal Infallibility

* Letters to *The Times* reproduced in Selections from the Correspondence of the first Lord Acton, ed. by Figgis and Laurence, 1917.

could be expected to be loyal after it. In more than one period of history Catholics, he pointed out, have resisted the decrees of Popes on other than matters of faith and morals—like the Irish resisting the arms of Henry II though two Popes had given him dominion over them, they fought against William III although the Pope had given him sufficient support for his expedition". Lord Acton affirmed that "in the fiercest conflict of the Reformation when the rulers of the Church had almost lost heart in the struggle for existence and exhausted every source of their authority, both political and spiritual, the bulk of English Catholics retained the spirit of a better time".

And as for Bismarck who had tried by the May Laws of 1873 to exclude the influence of Rome in the education of the clergy, jurisdiction in Church cases, appointment and dismissal of ministers and who in the height of the struggle with the Papacy declared "he would not go to Canossa", he was obliged eventually to come to a compromise with Rome, forced to do so by the unanimity of opinion of the clergy and the laity led by Windthorst, the great founder and leader of the Centre Party in Germany.

It is not against any particular government that the Church asserts its right to freedom. It has asserted this right against democracies as against monarchies, against Legitimists as against Revolutionaries, against Governments as against popular movements like the Action Francaise in France in the period between the last two World Wars. Napoleon resented Pope Pius VII's resistance to some of his decrees till he discovered that the Pope had resisted the restored Bourbons also. "When I saw that the Pope resisted the Bourbons in the affairs of the Bishops," he acknowledged, "the scales fell from my eyes." For, the Church when it resists Governments and peoples, stands for the higher laws of morality and of the Spirit. Hindus who proclaim the subordination of Hindu kings to the law of Dharma and their spokesmen, their Brahmin Purohits, should be the last to resent the claims of the Church to precedence over the State in matters of Morality and the Spirit, and the preference which Christians give to God and the laws of God to the claims of States and Governments.

The next charge against the Christian Missionaries is that they have been "straining their nerve to break up the solidarity of Hindu society" (p. 137). We suppose, it is by the introduction of a new community in India. But the break up of the solidarity of the Hindu society began long ago. It is as old as Hindu society itself. The caste system hammered an in-

(6) Middle Schools	...	...	34
(7) Teachers' Training Schools	...	...	3
(8) Industrial Schools	...	...	6
(9) Hospitals	...	...	22
(10) Dispensaries	...	...	33
(11) Leprosy Institutions	...	...	5
(12) Tuberculosis Sanitorium	...	...	1
(13) Home for Widows	...	...	3
(14) Orphanages and Hostels	...	...	22
(15) Social Service Centres	...	...	2

The Catholics maintain

High Schools	...	18	No. of pupils	...	5,738
Primary Schools	...	118	" " "	...	4,590
Industrial and Technical Schools	...	2	" " "	...	243
Agricultural Schools or Settlements	...	1			
Medical Dispensaries	...	43			
Hospitals	...	11	No. of beds	...	92
Orphanages	...	31	No. of inmates	...	798
Leper Asylums or Poor Houses	...	2			

Christian Duty to State

It is not merely by answering the charges levelled by the Niyogi Committee against Christian missionaries and their converts that the case for Christianity in India is proved. That case has a more positive argument. That proof is furnished by the whole theory and practice of Christianity in history and by the history of Christianity in India. That Christians in India are a foreign element in the body-politic, that they may prove a political danger, that they are liable to be bad citizens, disloyal, indifferent and even hostile to the interests of their country, that they are a liability rather than an asset is disproved by the political and social doctrine of Christianity and by the history of its influence in every part of the world. That doctrine was first formulated in the decisive direction of their Founder when this very question of the political duty of his followers was raised. To the question put by one of his critics "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar" who was then the overlord of Judea,

he sent for a coin in which this tribute was paid and pointing to the image and superscription on the coin said "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's". That is to say, give to lawful rulers the obedience due to their laws and decrees and commands, pay the taxes due to them, and render to them other services their position and privilege of authority demand.

That principle governing the relations of subjects to Governments has been followed by Christians ever since. The Apostles repeated it in other words but with similar definition and decision. Peter in his first Epistle advised "Be subject to all and to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as superior or unto governors set by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for praise to them that do well, for so is the will of God". And further "Honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king". St. Paul in his Epistles to the Romans said "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God". And this obedience is inculcated "not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake". Political obedience is a matter of conscience to the Christian citizen. And in his Epistle to Titus, Paul again exhorts the Christians of his time "to obey magistrates and to be ready to every good work". And this exhortation to perform one's political duties as a matter of conscience is continued in the early centuries of Christianity by the Fathers of the Church. The payment of taxes and duties on goods levied by Governments is insisted on in the Ambrosiaster, for, as St. Augustine says, "to defraud the fisc is fraud". St. Augustine also insists on the substitution of public justice for private vengeance as a means of putting an end to disputes between citizens. St. Thomas Aquinas speaking of Christians under rulers that are not Christian states that "government and dominion depend from human law, the divine law however which is a law of grace does not abolish human law which is founded upon natural reason; so the distinction between the faithful (Christians) and the non-faithful (non-Christians) considered in itself does not invalidate the government and dominion of the non-faithful over the faithful".

Not that this political obedience is to be absolute and unconditional. The right of resistance to civil law and civil acts

* These facts and quotations are taken from an article by Gabriel Le Bras in an Address at the Semaine Sociale of Reims, 1954.

† *Summa Theologica* quoted in D'Entrevies Aquinas, Selected Political Writings.

of governments is allowed by Christian authorities. Refusal to obey—passive resistance in fact—acts of Governments opposed to natural law or divine or ecclesiastical law is sanctioned by Christian tradition. But obedience is the rule and resistance the rare exception—and subject to definite conditions and criteria.

A Matter of Conscience

The whole political duty of man is made a matter of conscience—that is the special contribution of Christianity to a code of political conduct and behaviour. We find this illustrated in the old questionnaires * issued to priests for their use in the confessional. Each profession seems to have had its own set of questions. For instance, “judges were asked if they did not allow themselves to be overcome by sleep or drowsiness”. And jewellers were asked “if they did not sell as genuine emeralds that were imitation or composition”. Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, drew up an “Examination of Conscience on the duties of Monarchy” and he made himself *persona non grata* to Louis XIV by his remonstrances and protests against the defects and abuses of his Government.

Not only the passive duty of obedience to lawful Governments but the positive duty of contributing as much as they can to the peace and prosperity of the State has been the practice of Christians from the beginning. They realise the value of unity. They have taken to heart the teaching of their Master, “A kingdom divided against itself shall perish”. His own disciples he advised, “Be ye one as my Father and I am one.” St. Jerome in the first years of Christianity taught that “just as concord makes little things grow, so discord brings the greatest to ruin”. In the disturbed times of the formation of the new States of Europe after the fall of the Roman empire and the dissolving effects of the Barbarian Invasions, Christian Fathers and Bishops preached to their people the value and duty of unity. The Fathers of the Council of Mayence in 847 recommended that “peace and concord between men, especially between Christians is the supreme good and worthy of the supreme word”. The Canonists have insisted on the virtue of unity, visiting the dire punishment of excommunication on all those that would attempt to endanger it. St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle and the Fathers, shows that discord is the sure

* Gabriel Le Bras in an Address at the Semaine Sociale of Reims, 1954.

road to the dissolution of social groups and corporations. The Catholic Church especially has guarded this note of unity with zeal and jealousy. For the sake of unity it dared to lose large sections of Christendom at the time of the Reformation. Wherever Christianity has gone it has preached and practised the virtue of unity. It has created national hierarchies in countries even before there was a National State there. Canterbury has preceded London,—Rheims, Paris,—Toledo, Madrid,—Malines, Brussels.

Christianity and Patriotism

It is therefore astonishing that the Committee should accuse Christianity of being anti-national. This accusation is refuted by the whole history of Christianity in general and of India in particular. Love of country is among the chief precepts of its secular teaching. Christ in one of the most poignant appeals of a patriot to his countrymen cried out "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered thy children together as a hen gathers her children under her wings—but ye would not". St. Paul confessed that he was a Jew, son of a Jew, although he preached against any distinction between Jew and Gentile in religion. St. Augustine argued that "although all men must be loved, as we cannot come in contact with all, they must especially be cultivated when by place or time or opportunity they are bound to you by a certain chance". St. Thomas Aquinas traced patriotism to intrinsic reason, natural sentiment, and the natural attractions of social life and founded it on the Christian virtue of charity. St. Francis of Assisi, lover of all men and all people as he was, when he was about to die, asked to be taken to the top of a hill from which he could have a last view of his native country. Among the duties imposed by the Church on the knights of the Middle Ages was this "Thou shalt love the country where thou wast born". The Chanson de Roland sang

Pour elle on doit souffrir grand maux
Fort endurer, et grands froids et grand chauds
On doit y perdre et son sang et son chair.

"For her (country) one must suffer much evil, and endure intense cold and heat; for her one must lose one's flesh and blood."

* *De Doctrina Christi* quoted in Blondel in *Sermaine Sociale de France*, Paris, 1923.

This medieval tradition has been continued in modern times. Bossuet * in the 17th century taught "Human society demands that we love the land where we live and that we regard it as a common mother and nurse; we thus attach ourselves to one another and are united". Fenelon agreed with his great rival and critic at least in this, for "he would have us place our family above ourselves, our country above our family in our affections". The modern national movements have found Catholics among the most ardent supporters. Catholic Bishops have led nationalist movements in Eastern Europe. In the Cathedral of St. Vitus at Prague in ancient Bohemia (modern Czechoslovakia) two priests were charged officially by a Will of one of its Canons, with the duty of imploring God to preserve the Bohemian people. In the same century the Jesuit Bolislav Balbus protected against the germanisation of Bohemia and another Jesuit Belihomski called on the patron saint of Bohemia to help them against their enemies. A third Jesuit Dobovsky helped to lay the foundation of the study of Slav philology. In the 19th century the Catholic Uniate Metropolitan of Transylvania said "In our hearts as in the heart of every nation, there is towards the members of their nation, that impulse, that supra-national sense by which we love our Rumanian brothers who live in the Danubian principalities, or, no matter in what region of the world". Among the Croats there were the priests George Kripaintahl Suibert (reviver of Slav language and literature who founded a Slavic Review) and Gregoric, the leader of Slovene nationalism. But the great Bishop Strossnmayer is better known as the champion of the Croats against the tyranny of the Magyars of Hungary and whose episcopal motto was "All for Faith and Country". It was the judgment of Laveleye, a well-known French political writer of the 19th century, that "it was in the seminaries that the movement of the nationalities derived its expansive force which spread it all over the valley of the Danube".

Support to True Nationalism

The Popes themselves have favoured and supported genuine national movements. Ireland and Poland, those flaming swords of nationality at either end of Europe, have found in the Popes of Rome support and encouragement. Benedict XV acclaimed the resurrection of Poland at the end of the First World War and offered a welcome even to non-Catholic nationalities in

* *Politique tire de l'écriture sainte.*

Eastern Europe who strove to develop and prosper according to their own genius and resources.* As for the teaching of the modern Popes on love of country it has been in the old Catholic tradition. Leo XIII speaking of the duties of Christians as citizens in his Encyclical Letter of January 10, 1890, said "the supernatural love for the Church and the natural love of our country proceed from the same eternal principle since God himself is their Author and originating Cause", and recommended that "Catholics must bear themselves kindly towards their fellowmen, nourish affection for the State and the governing powers". The present Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical *Summi Pontificatus* of 20th October 1939 taught that "the Church of Christ, faithful depository of divine wisdom, cannot think and does not think of discouraging or belittling those peculiarities and differences which mark out one nation from another, for it is quite legitimate for nations to treat these differences as a sacred inheritance and guard them at all costs". Christian education, he insisted, ought to have among its ends "the preparation of youth, to enable it to fulfil with intelligence, conscience and enthusiasm, the duties of a noble patriotism giving to the earthly country all the measure of love, of devotion, and co-operation due to it."

It is only against an extreme and exaggerated nationalism that the Catholic Church has protested. For beyond our country is humanity. Love of country hostile to love of humanity is unhealthy. From country we must look to the higher call of humanity, advised Fenelon. "Love of country," says Pope Pius XII, "must not interfere with, must not take precedence of the commandment to show Christian charity towards all men, a commandment which makes our fellow-creatures generally and their interests take a place in the sunlight of our peace-making love." The modern heresy of Nationality concisely expressed in the maxim "One nation One State" has been treated in an original and critical manner by Lord Acton in his Essay on Nationality † which appeared as an article in a quarterly review in 1862 and which has now been acclaimed and quoted with approval by political scientists like C. A. Macartney and E. H. Carr and in the report on Nationalism of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Lord Acton shows in this Essay

* These facts about the Catholic National movements in Eastern Europe are taken from Goyau-*L'Eglise libre dans l'Europe* in *Revue des deux mondes*, July 1, 1919.

† Included in *History of Freedom and Other Essays*.

how the modern theory of Nationality arose out of the Partition of Poland which divided this nation among the States of Russia, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary, and out of the French Revolution with its theory of sovereignty of the general will and proves how it is "a chimera for the settlement at which it aims is impossible" and in the end is destructive of democracy as of liberty. For, "by making the State and the Nation commensurate with each other in theory it reduces practically to an abject condition all other nationalities that may be within its boundary and makes the Nation the mould and measure of the State. "My country right or wrong" is a maxim that is as immoral as it is unpolitical. It is like saying as Chesterton pointed out "My mother—drunk or sober". You may continue to love her but you cannot approve of her conduct. And Acton said "the man who prefers his country before every other duty shows the same spirit as the man who surrenders every right to the State for they both deny that Right is superior to Authority".

It is as patriots, as lovers of their country that Christians have devoted themselves to its service. All movements for promoting the unity and progress and prosperity of the country they have welcomed and helped and strengthened. The political movement towards self-government and freedom has enrolled Christian leaders in its list. The first President of the Indian National Congress, W. C. Bonnerjee, was a Christian, so was Kali Charen Banerjee, another President. Mr. Joseph Baptista was the right-hand of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his Swaraj campaign and he inaugurated the Trade Union movement in Bombay. Upadhyaya Brahmabandav yielded his first role of Christian apologist and missionary to that of a fighting Nationalist. In the mass movement towards independence inaugurated and led by Mahatma Gandhi, Christian groups had joined all over the country. In the Travancore-Cochin territory they form the backbone of Congress party strength. Some of these leaders have even passed the supreme test of Congress party loyalty—going to jail. Christians have become Ministers in Congress Governments, one of them even led a Congress Ministry—Mr. A. J. John, recently appointed Governor of Madras. Leading Christians are counted among the prominent supporters of Congress—the late George Joseph, Fr. Jerome D'Souza, Mr. B. S. Gilani, Mr. Roche Victoria and Mr. C. J. Varkey, former Ministers of Madras, Mr. Boniface Lakra of the Tribal Christians of Chota-Nagpur in Bihar, the late Mr. Masilamoney of Tuticorin who suffered for the cause as much as better-known Congressmen.

Lead to the Country

It is in the field of social service that Christians have given a lead to the country. The first modern schools and colleges to be established by private agencies were those established by Christians. As early as the 18th century the S.P.C.U. in Southern India and the Danish Mission at Tranquebar founded a number of elementary schools—and so did Roman Catholic missions. The Benevolent Institution was founded in Calcutta in 1810 for the instruction of Eurasian and other poor children. The London Missionary Society founded schools along the Carnatic Coast beginning with Vizagapatam in 1805. We find at about the same time mission schools in Chittagong, Dacca, Benares, Bareilly and Agra and Gorakhpur and Delhi. In the Madras Presidency in 1852 the missionary schools enrolled four times as many pupils as the Government schools. Higher education was provided from the middle of the 19th century in the Serampore College, the Bishop's College at Calcutta, the Syrian College at Kottayam, the C.M.S. School at Palamcottah.* It was about the middle of the 19th century that the Jesuits established their first High School and College at Negapatam which later was transferred to Trichinopoly and which has developed into the famous St. Joseph's College of Trichinopoly.

Other Jesuit Colleges are to be found at Palamcottah, Madras and Bezwada and Calcutta and Bombay and Ranchi. Almost every Catholic diocese in India has a High School, some more than one, and every Parish an elementary school. And Christian schools and colleges have done more for the education of girls than any other agency. As a result of Protestant endeavour in Madras there are among the Protestants 2 university colleges, 15 high schools, 6 industrial schools, 3 agricultural settlements, 6 co-operative societies, 33 medical dispensaries. And in the whole of India Protestant missions maintain 45 university colleges with a student body of 23,757, 250 high schools, 500 middle schools, 250 hospitals and dispensaries, 8 T.B. sanatoria, 3 medical colleges, 80 agricultural settlements, 50 co-operative societies, 165 industrial schools. The Catholics maintain 29 university colleges for men, 24 colleges for women, 450 high schools, 2,750 primary schools, 350 medical dispensaries, 53 hospitals, 25 industrial schools, 15 co-operative societies, about 100 orphanages, homes for the poor and the aged, 15 leper asylums.

* These facts are taken from Ingham—*Reformers in India, 1956*.

It is this social service that Christians ask to be allowed to continue to offer to India. And India cannot afford to do without it. There is so much to be done and to be done as quickly as possible for the progress and prosperity of India, that the services of even Christians cannot be spurned. There are the 200 millions to be made literate, the 250 millions in the villages to be adequately fed, clothed, housed and guarded against malaria, cholera, and the other ills to which flesh in India is heir. There are the 5 million beggars to be turned into honest citizens, the 1 million lepers and other incurables to be cared for. Christians must be allowed to serve the poor and the depressed of India. But as this duty to serve is coupled with the right to convert, Hindu opinion has found the claim a stumbling block and a rock of offence—although the right to convert is guaranteed by the Constitution. For Christians the duty cannot be divorced from the right. For their social service derives its strength from the inspiration of Christ and the love of Christ. And their movement to convert is nothing else but the desire to share their love of Christ with as many of them as are willing to accept it. Without this inspiration and impulse, the social service will run dry. What objection can anybody have if this work of conversion is done in the way and by means of civilised persuasion? The fraud and the force which the Niyogi Committee allege consist—apart from wild unproved charges—only in the social services the Missionaries render. If seeing and benefiting from these services people want to become the followers of a religion which inspires such work for the poor and the depressed, it is neither manly nor wise to oppose the movement.

The only reply that Hindus can reasonably make to this challenge of Christianity is to go and do likewise. Let Hindu social service agencies enter into friendly competition with the Christians. Only let it not be cut-throat competition which, as in Madhya Pradesh, stoops to establishing State schools and other institutions within the area served already by Christian institutions, with a view to eliminating them. The area of social service is so large and the number of people to be served is so great that duplication of works in the same area is criminal wastage of the all too few resources available. But whatever others may or may not do, Christians will continue and increase their social work. They will increase it to the extent of the opportunities open to them and under the impulse of the inspiration that brings out the best and the highest in them. Because

this service is accompanied and inspired by the prospects of conversion should India deny itself this benefit?

"Menace to Unity"

And what after all are the dire consequences that will follow the conversion of those that want to be converted—if say all the people of the Aboriginal Tribes and the Depressed Classes are converted to Christianity? The Niyogi Committee is afraid that such a large Christian population will be a menace to the unity of India. As the Muslims seceded the Christians may want to secede, is the insinuation of the Committee. It is a charge that is as cruel as it is stupid. Nowhere have Christians wanted to form a Christian State out of the nation or State to which they belong. Here in India they have never asked for a separate State. Their leaders opposed the Partition of India. It was a Hindu leader not a Christian that suggested the partition of India. Why should Christians want a separate State? They are content with the rights and liberties the Constitution assures them and all other citizens. They enjoy toleration, and the respect and regard of their fellow-citizens in all but a few jungle States. They are satisfied with the political preferments that come a minority's way. All they ask for is the practical and effective exercise of the rights assured to them by the Constitution and the consideration due to them as a serviceable minority. Moreover, a large Christian community will produce that balance of power between the communities of a State which, according to Lord Acton, is the best guarantee of individual and corporate freedom and will secure that social competition between communities which would promote the good of the country. The Christian community on account of the record of its services in the past and the possibility of still greater service in the future deserves the consideration and regard of their fellow-citizens.

Service to the Country

For, not in return for this consideration, but with the encouragement that comes from this consideration, they will go on doing, as they have done before, in the service of their country. And if their numbers are allowed to increase, the area and energy and resources of this service will also increase. For Christians have it in them on account of the social ideas of their religion to render useful and lasting service to their coun-

try. What St. Augustine said of the Christians of the 4th century in reply to a challenge such as that thrown at the Christians of India today is applicable to them also. "Let those," he said, "who say that the doctrine of Christ is incompatible with the State's well-being give us an army composed of such soldiers as the doctrine of Christ requires them to be; let them give us such masters and servants, such kings and judges; such tax-payers and tax-gatherers as the Christian religion has taught that men should be and then let them dare to say that it is opposed to the State's well-being".

It is with this conviction and hope that the Christians of India face the future, confident that by their service to the stability, the social integration and the progress and prosperity of free and independent India they will earn to a greater extent than ever before their right to live and prosper in their native land.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION—PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

By

M. F. COLACO

At a time when we are witnessing the tragic consequences of the inflaming of communal passion, it is regrettable that the Committee of Enquiry of Christian Missionary Activities, Madhya Pradesh, should have produced a Report, which, betraying as it does in almost every line a prejudice and an intense animus against Christian Missionary activity in India, has caused the deepest resentment among Christians in this country. The Inquiry, the Committee acknowledges in the course of its Report, was not judicial, in the sense that it could not follow the regular judicial procedure. There is, however, a more real sense in which the Inquiry was not judicial, for the Report reads more like the prosecuting Counsel's charge-sheet against the accused, who wisely refrained from defending themselves, as they could hardly expect a fair trial at the hands of what was evidently a packed Committee. It is true that the members of the Inquiry Committee, in a more generous though passing mood, admit that "in all places visited by the Committee there was unanimity as regards the excellent services rendered by the Missionaries in the fields of education and missionary relief". A more handsome tribute to the Christian missionaries has been paid in the Summary of the Recommendations, which is couched in the following terms:

"The contribution of Christian missionaries to the shaping of Indian life in modern times has, indeed, been very impressive. . . . They established schools and colleges, hospitals and dispensaries, orphanages and institutions for the maimed and the handicapped. They elevated the neglected classes to high social positions and made them worthy of filling responsible posts in public services, and in all cases made them conscious of their dignity as men,

and inspired them with self-respect. They stimulated many religious and social reforms in the Hindu society and made it self-conscious. They have helped in the elevation of the status of women by giving the lead in female education. The community centres and industrial schools opened by them are, like their other institutions, the best of their kind."

One may well doubt, however, the sincerity of these tributes, so much at variance with the whole tenor of the Report. For belying these protestations, there appear within the covers of the Report all kinds of insinuations, veiled attacks and open charges, which in the aggregate constitute a formidable indictment against all forms of Christian endeavour in India. Once again the old cry is raised against religious dogmatism and institutionalism. Catholic schools are charged with breeding discord and fostering anti-national tendencies, and of practising deceit on the simple and the unwary (Niyogi Report, pp. 131-132). In the eyes of the Committee, Catholic educational institutions are not much more than ill-disguised centres for proselytism. The policy of imparting religious education in Catholic schools is likewise strongly deprecated. But it is easy to see that all this vast array of facts, many of them ferreted out from the dusty archives of history, with an industry worthy of a better cause, all the wide historical surveys of Christian activity at home and abroad, are only too plainly designed to undermine public confidence in Christian education, in priests and the Religious Orders, and even, for all the lip-service paid to the intrinsic excellence of Christian ethics, in Christianity itself.

Serious as the allegations in the Report are, and however cleverly presented, they could evidently make little impression on the large number of non-Christians, who have either themselves experienced the benefits of Catholic education, or who have heard of it through those whom they so willingly entrusted to these Catholic institutions. They have realized its true value, and will not be easily misled by any false propaganda. Among these there are a considerable number of civic and political leaders who continue to show an undiminished faith in the system of education so unequivocally condemned by the Niyogi Report. But to the others the findings of the Report will have come with the sudden shock of a revelation. In the absence of any direct knowledge, they have to rely on the judgment and the opinions expressed by the members of the Niyogi Committee, all, no doubt, men of standing, and presumably like the knights

of old, bold men and true. Catholic educational practice, however, is based on Catholic principles. With these principles, these men are not even remotely acquainted. Inevitably, therefore, to them the sentiments expressed by the Committee have an impressive air of truth and carry full conviction.

It is not only in a spirit of self-defence that Catholics are taking up the cudgels on behalf of their schools. For what the Report arraigns is not so much the work done in Catholic schools as the very basis of Catholic educational principles and policy. Maybe the members of the Committee themselves are not quite aware of these principles. It is all the more necessary, therefore, to expound them in the light of the central doctrines of Catholicism. With the specific charges brought against Catholic schools in Madhya Pradesh a more competent writer, who can speak with more intimate local experience, deals elsewhere in this volume. Meanwhile it is necessary to establish the *bona fides* of Catholic missionary educational policies and methods. In presenting the case for the Catholic schools quotations from the official documents of the Roman Catholic Church must necessarily be given. In this way the fullest opportunity will be provided for honest and inquiring minds, for men who have real respect for conviction and good will, whatever their religious beliefs, to acquire at first hand a knowledge of the aims and purposes of Catholic education.

The Aim of Catholic Education

On December 29, 1929, Pope Pius XI published an Encyclical Letter, entitled "On the Christian Education of Youth." This has become the Magna Charta of Catholic Education. In setting forth the aim of Education, the Holy Father has proclaimed to the Catholic world in particular and to the public in general, one of the fundamental tenets of the Catholic faith. This is only natural, for the essential doctrines of Catholicism are transmitted by education.

"It must never be forgotten that the subject of Christian education is man, whole and entire, soul united to body, in unity of nature with all his faculties, natural and supernatural, such as right reason and Revelation show him to be; man, therefore, fallen from his original estate, but redeemed by Christ and restored to the supernatural condition of adopted son of God, though without the preternatural privileges of bodily immortality or perfect control of appetite. There remain, therefore, in human

nature the effects of Original Sin, the chief of which are weakness of will and disorderly inclinations."

Pius XI (Five Great Encyclicals, p. 54)

"Since Education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end."

Pius XI (*ibidem*, p. 39)

Stated in these terms, Catholic education will be seen to be a process that not only endeavours to realize the old classical ideal of the development of the whole man, but also directs it to a higher purpose. Catholic education is a great natural means to a great natural and supernatural end. The secularization of education, wherever the measure has been introduced, has deprived man of the richer spiritual resources of education. For Catholic training is intended to prepare man for the complete fulfilment of his religious, civic and family duties, keeping always before him the goal for which God has made him, that is, participation in the divine life here, and in greater plenitude, hereafter. It is easy, therefore, to see why the imparting of religious instruction in Catholic schools, to which the Niyogi Report has taken strong exception, forms such an essential part of Catholic education. Believing as Christianity does in the obvious fact of man's weak nature, the result of Adam's fall from the state of original justice, Catholic education maintains the necessity of a rebirth in grace, as well as of a subsequent religious upbringing. No mere profane education can, therefore, be a substitute for it, because it can never be a cure for man's wounded nature.

"Every method of education founded, wholly or in part, in the denial or forgetfulness of original sin and of grace, and relying on the sole powers of human nature, is unsound. Such, generally speaking, are those modern systems bearing various names which appeal to a pretended self-government and unrestrained freedom on the part of the child, and which diminish or even suppress the teacher's authority and action, attributing to the child an exclusive primacy of initiative and an activity independent of higher law, natural or divine in the work of his education."

Pius XI (*ibidem*, p. 55)

Deluded by an easy optimism, naturalists have declared that education should ignore religion and man's final destiny. Such systems of education as are devised by them, while they discourage religious teaching, make it centre round a vague humanitarianism or some form of materialism, towards which all subjects in the curriculum are orientated. This "modern" trend in education has only resulted in an absorbing pre-occupation with mere material interests and progress, leading ultimately to that mechanization of life, which is one of the greatest evils of our civilization today. It is from this type of training that the Catholic Church wishes to protect her children. Against a secularism, that promises nothing beyond material returns, the Church has resolutely set her face, and adhered unswervingly to the ideal of an education that is filled with the religious spirit.

"It is necessary not only that religious instruction be given to the young at certain fixed times, but also that every other subject taught be permeated with Christian piety. If this is wanting, if this sacred atmosphere does not pervade and warm the hearts of masters and scholars alike, little good can be expected from any kind of learning, and considerable harm will often be the consequence."

Pius XI, quoting Leo XIII's Encyclical Letter of August 1, 1897, *ibidem*, pp. 60-61.

It is a fundamental Catholic belief that Christ came into this world as man, not only to redeem mankind, but also to *teach*. This divine mandate he entrusted, in the first instance, to His Apostles when he commissioned them to go and teach all nations, and then to the Church which He instituted to carry on His mission until the consummation of the world.

When Christ's own injunction to His followers to *teach* was so final and authoritative, it is obvious that Catholic schools would be failing in their duty if they did not impart religious instruction to Catholic students. For this is one of the ways in which they can keep intact the truths of Christ, and guide Catholic children, preserving them from all moral and doctrinal errors. To the benefits that have accrued to civilization in the past 1900 years from the execution of this command, History will bear ample testimony. Along with the cause of Religion, the Church has also promoted the interests of Culture, of Science and of Democracy, thus giving the lie to the charges often brought against her, that she suppresses learning and is the enemy of Freedom.

Nor is it less incumbent on Catholic parents to see that their children are given religious instruction in their schools. Education is not just an individual activity, it is also essentially a social process, which is promoted by the mutual co-operation of men within a community. For Catholics, the School is the meeting ground of three human societies, the Church, the Family and the State. The duty of Catholic parents towards their children, if it begins with their birth, does not end until the children are fully equipped for the essential tasks which await them in Society. According to the Catholic Church's own positive law, parents are bound by a most serious obligation to provide to the best of their ability, for the religious, moral, physical and civil education of their children, as well as for their temporal welfare (*Codex Juris Canonici*, p. 113). In this way, Catholic parents are reminded of their grave responsibility towards their children in the matter of all, but especially religious, education.

The Catholic family is not a self-contained unit: it does not have within itself all the means to attain its ultimate end. In matters religious, it depends on the Church; for temporal necessities, such as education, health, recreation, etc., it must rely on other individuals, families and civil society. It is the Holy Father himself who has explained the basic relationship of the State to the Family:

(In the field of education) "rights have been conferred upon civil society by the Author of Nature Himself . . . in virtue of the authority which it possesses to promote the common temporal welfare which is precisely the purpose of its existence. . . . Now this end and object, the common welfare in the temporal order, consists in that peace and security in which families and individual citizens have the free exercise of their rights, and at the same time enjoy the greatest spiritual and temporal prosperity possible in this life, by the mutual union and co-ordination of the work of all. The function therefore of the civil authority residing in the State is twofold, to protect and to foster, but by no means to absorb, the family and the individual, or to substitute itself for them. Accordingly, in the matter of education, it is the right, or to speak more correctly, it is the duty of the State to protect in its legislation, the prior rights of the family as regards the Christian education of its offspring. . . ."

Pius XI (*ibid*, p. 48)

This attitude the Catholic Church has re-affirmed in recent years, when it found itself faced in totalitarian countries with the inroads of the State on the legitimate rights of parents, granted by Natural Law, to control the education of their children. Nazism and Fascism on the one hand, and Communism on the other, however intrinsically opposed to each other, are at one in claiming the child as State property, and education as a State monopoly. The rise of these sinister forces has exposed the danger of the concept of the State as the sole agent responsible for the education of its citizens. There are obviously certain areas in which the State can effectively intervene in education; for instance, when smaller groups or individuals cannot maintain their own institutions for reasons of material expenditure, or the special nature of the schools, such as the specialized schools for the handicapped or the retarded children, or military schools. But the State ought not to compete with, or restrict the scope of, private, educational enterprise. It should rather encourage it, in order to promote more effectively religious, moral and civic culture.

The Catholic Church has always recognized Herself and the State as two perfect societies, with delimited spheres and functions, within their own respective realms, spiritual and temporal. As these societies naturally impinge on each other, it is absolutely necessary to maintain an understanding, or balance and co-ordination between them, in the interests of the common welfare of its members.

" . . . between the two powers there must reign a well-ordained harmony. Not without reason may this mutual agreement be compared to the union of body and soul in man. . . . To one is committed directly and specifically the charge of what is helpful in worldly matters; while the other is to concern itself with the things that pertain to heaven and eternity. . . ."

Pius XI (quoting Leo XIII's Encyclical Letter of November 1, 1885, *ibid*, p. 51)

Education in India

Education in India had from the remotest antiquity been religious, and the system had won in the earliest times universal recognition. Nalanda and Taxila, far-famed university centres, had attracted students from many parts of the world outside India. They had not only promoted the love of secular learning, but also of religious studies. While the old rishis sang on

the banks of the Ganges, the sacred strophes from the Vedas, the gurus and sages were not only concerned with the imparting of knowledge of the things of this world, but with questions relating to God and the human soul. Both in the ancient Hindu *gurukulas*, and in the Muslim *maktabs*, students were trained for the performance of their respective religious duties. It was in either case a system of education of which religious instruction formed a vital part.

With the advent of the British, there was a reversal of this trend, and a neutralist policy in regard to religion in education was adopted. This was probably for the British a matter of expediency, for in a country of so many different religions, it was obviously difficult for them to draw up and implement an effective programme of religious instruction in schools and colleges. English education in India was, therefore, necessarily laic, as no religion could officially or compulsorily be taught in any State-recognized institution. For most of the Indians who were brought up under this system of education, religion was either a set of practices or a vague religious consciousness, for all the religion they knew was what had been imparted to them in their early childhood. However, in a country which has always been believed to possess a genius for religion, formal education was completely divorced from the springs of religion and those higher truths about man's ultimate destiny, which are only accessible through religion. Moreover, the text-books and the course of reading prescribed for our students in schools and particularly in colleges in India were the works of 19th and 20th century English rationalists and liberal thinkers, which familiarized Indian youth with trends of thought that were far from religious. What was called the emancipation of the modern Indian mind was, after all, an emancipation from its religious and cultural heritage. A century of neutralism in education has caused the tragedy of modern Indians—the dehydrated systems of education, which have been sapped of religious ideals and idealism (cf. T. N. Sequeira: *Two Features of Indian Education*, pp. 390-393, and C. J. Varkey: *The Wardha Scheme of Education*).

A generation that has been nurtured on a purely secular type of education has, therefore, little use for religion in education. They have naturally brought themselves to believe that what was good enough for them is good enough for their children, and that moral education is an adequate substitute for religious instruction. Too often has religion been considered to be in recent times a socially disruptive influence, and

religious earnestness a mark of fanaticism. As corroborative evidence, there is the hardy annual of the Inquisition and the Wars of Religion. At the UNESCO Conference, which was held in New Delhi on "Humanism and Education in East and West", in December 1951, the opinions expressed were generally in favour of Secular Education.

There is, on the other hand, solid evidence of growing awareness in India, on the part of sober and responsible leaders of Indian opinion, like Dr. Radhakrishnan and Mr. Rajagopalachari, of the inadequacy of mere moral instruction as a basis for the building of a sound moral character. This policy of laicism in education has often been tried, having often come in the wake of revolutions, but has failed deplorably in some of the countries of the West. In India today there is an enormous student population that is knocking at the doors of schools, primary and secondary, and of University Colleges. This seething mass of eager-eyed, young humanity must be properly trained and disciplined, if we are to have in India a healthier democracy, which is conscious not only of its rights, but even more so of its responsibilities. Already there are signs of restiveness in the Indian student-community. The virus of Communism has infected not a few of young Indian minds. Almost every day newspapers report acts of student indiscipline, culminating at times in open violence. The Second Five-Year Plan, on which we have just embarked, with its programme of a more intensive industrialization, holds out wider prospects for the country, and is likely to create a social and economic revolution. Nothing is more necessary, therefore, at the moment, in order to harness and canalize these forces, than a wise and far-seeing leadership. It is out of the schools and colleges that will come the future leaders of India. But could a sane and sure leadership be expected from people who have not been fully equipped with both secular and religious knowledge? We are still reaping the fruits of the Industrial Revolution, of the excesses and injustices to which it gave rise, of the naturalist philosophies it inspired and which have infiltrated into Indian schools. India must be saved from that paralysing sense of doubt which has left a part of the world hovering between the wish and the inability to believe. "Every one of us," says C. J. Varkey in his *Wardha Scheme of Education*,—and Mr. Varkey was a Minister of Education in the Madras Congress Cabinet,—“is fully aware of the difficulty of providing such training in a country of so many religions; but

we have to bear in mind that no amount of difficulty can extinguish a sacred and primary duty."

The problem of how to impart religious instruction in mixed schools, in view of the diversity of India's religions, still remains unsolved, but the necessity of it has been widely recognized. In his criticism of the Wardha Scheme, Mr. Varkey deplores the absence of religion. He rather appositely points out—for communalism is today in India the shadow on men's minds—that religion is not the same as communalism. To root out communalism it is not necessary to do away with religion, for communalism is only a gross perversion and debasement of the religious sentiment. Mr. Varkey's standpoint is one that is finding increased acceptance among educationists in India today. They have seen the results of an education that put God into the background, and advocate, like Mr. Varkey, a system in which "God takes his legitimate place as the author of the Universe and the Creator and Lord of Man". (Varkey, *ibid*, p. 110.)

It is significant that the Radhakrishnan Report on University Education devotes a whole chapter to Religious Education. It does not shirk the issue, and after reviewing the conclusions of previous University Commissions, it has expressed the following opinion which is an acknowledgement of the vital influence of Religion in Education:

"Religion is a permeative influence, a quality of life, an elevation of purpose. Our institutions, if they are to impart religious vitality, should have simplicity and an atmosphere of consecration that permanently influence lives."

(The Report of the University Education Commission, Vol. I, p. 300.)

Admitting the inherent difficulty of giving religious instruction to multi-religious groups in the Universities, the Commission recommends that work in educational institutions should start with a few minutes of silent meditation, that Degree Courses be given successively in the study of great religious leaders, the Scriptures of the principal religions and their philosophical concepts. Whatever the merit of these proposals, there is evidently an implicit recognition in them of the necessity and value of religious education in the Universities.

Indian Catholic Schools and Religious Instruction

“ . . . (without proper religious and moral instruction) every form of intellectual culture will be injurious; for young people not accustomed to respect God, will be unable to bear the restraint of a virtuous life, and never having learned to deny themselves anything, they will easily be incited to disturb the public order.”

(Pius XI, quoting the Encyclical Letter of Leo XIII, of February 1884, *ibid*, p. 43.)

“ Without religion, moral instruction is neither worthy of its name nor efficacious, because the very nature and the binding force of a duty is derived from those special obligations which man has towards God, who commands, forbids and attaches a sanction to evil and a reward to good. Wherefore, to pretend to inculcate sound moral principles into the souls and at the same time to leave them deprived of religion, is as senseless as to invite people to virtue after having eradicated its very foundation.”

(Leo XIII, in his Encyclical Letter of December 8, 1897, on Education.)

These authoritative pronouncements ought to dispel any idea that the Niyogi Report may have created in the minds of those who do not know the Catholic teaching in the matter of education, that religious instruction is a device surreptitiously introduced and with a view to the propagation of the Catholic Faith. It is the Sovereign Pontiffs themselves who have pointed out the inadequacy of a system of training without the basic impulse and leaven of Religion. The Catholic schools that give religious education to their Catholic students, *and to them alone*, are an essential part of her religious organization. In a country like India, where Catholics form a small minority, the aim of education does not differ fundamentally from that of the other countries in which they are in an overwhelming majority—and that is to turn out good citizens who are likely to be all the better citizens because their character has been moulded by the Catholic Faith. Where Catholicism is not yet established—and this is one of the tokens of its universality—it must acclimatize itself and make itself thoroughly at home. This is the reason why it has been the declared policy of the Holy See to foster indigenous priestly and religious vocations. Of these vocations the Catholic schools are nurseries; for it is from them

that will come the spirit of dedication which alone makes for the highest service to the Church. To this service Catholic priests, both Indian and foreign, have pledged themselves in India during a long period of its history, and the Indian Catholic educational system, with its emphasis on religious instruction, is intended to help Catholics to live according to the fundamental tenets of their Faith.

The Problem of Non-Christians in Catholic Schools

It is common knowledge that all Catholic schools in India are open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, a wise step that has also been justified by results. It is a right guaranteed by the Constitution (Art. 29, para 2) that non-Catholic parents are entitled to send their children to all Catholic schools, which receive a Government grant-in-aid. But even in private Catholic institutions, which receive no Government assistance, non-Catholics are admitted, for the Catholic educational system does not allow of any discrimination.

Those who have been in Catholic schools know that it is certainly not true that, under the guise of education, attempts are made to convert people to Christianity. The good they do is that mixed schools provide a special opportunity to Catholic teachers for exercising Christian charity and tolerance and for obviating by their sincerity any anti-Catholic prejudice which may arise in the minds of their Hindu and Muslim brethren. Whatever conversions have taken place—and they have been very rare—have been inspired by the excellence of Christian ideals and the example set by the Catholic teacher. In his *Reminiscences*, Rabindranath Tagore has recalled his early education at St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, the personal interest the Fathers took in their students, and in particular the kindness of Father De Peneranda, and every time he remembered the Father, he said, it was as if he entered "the silent intimacy of a temple of God". Such unimpeachable testimony ought to relieve the sombre tones in which the Niyogi Report complains indiscriminately of the false pretences and deceit with which non-Christians are inveigled in Catholic schools into Christianity.

The Catholic Contribution to Education

It is impossible to give more than a brief idea of the enormous work that has been done by the Catholic missionaries

in the field of education, in shaping the mental and moral outlook of the younger generation in India. The values of education are both qualitative and quantitative; and even quantitatively speaking, Catholic Education has kept pace with the rapid expansion of education in recent years in this country. There are in India today established by Catholic organizations, 58 colleges, 6,176 schools, and 145 technical and industrial schools, besides a number of teacher-training institutions. The number of students receiving education therein is: Colleges 31,985, schools 1,041,083 (Catholic Directory, 1956). Though these figures are eloquent, it is the quality of Catholic education that has attracted and is still attracting, in spite of all attempts to traduce it, an increasing number of students to Catholic teaching establishments. Writing on University Reform in Bombay, in February 1924, Mr. L. R. Tairsee, a great nationalist, said in his article to the *Bombay Chronicle* entitled "Change of Spirit and Ways to Means":

"In the highest seats of the teaching profession, we want missionaries, not mercenaries. You cannot expect the British bureaucracy in charge of teaching institutions of the country to countenance any other ideal for the Professor except that of getting rich the quickest way one can. . . . The bulk of the selfless men who have exalted the educational profession in modern India are professional missionaries who have found in educating youth not an insurance against unemployment, but an avocation for the spirit. . . . Once more I turn to the religious foundations for aid in the gigantic problem facing us in the reconstruction of Universities."

The Pioneer Work done by Catholic Missions

It is the Indian Prime Minister himself, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has testified in his "The Discovery of India" to the pioneering work done by the Christian missionaries in India:

"The printing of books and newspapers broke the hold of the classics and immediately prose literatures in the provincial languages began to develop. The early Christian missionaries, especially of the Baptist mission at Serampore, helped in this process greatly. . . . There was no difficulty in dealing with the well-known and established languages, but the missionaries went further

and tackled some of the minor and undeveloped languages and gave them shape and form, compiling grammars and dictionaries for them. They even laboured at the dialects of the primitive hill and forest tribes and reduced them to writing. . . . In this respect, as well as in the collection of folklore, it has undoubtedly been of great service to India."

Of the creative achievement of the Catholic missions in various departments one could not naturally give more than a brief outline. Geography has gained much from the scientific explorations undertaken by some Jesuits, at the cost of untold trials and privation, even at times at the cost of their lives. The overland journey of *Brother B. Goes from India to China through Tibet* definitely established the identity of China and the Cathay of earlier centuries. The Brother plodded on for five years, suffering perils from every possible source, and finally reached the frontiers of China, where he died from sheer exhaustion. Father Monserratt (1566-1600) must be credited with the honour of being the first European since Ptolemy to make a map of India. D'Anville, a great authority on Indian geography, says that he drew from Father Bourdier's 'Mémoires' information of great importance for the geography of India. Father Noel drew up maps and gave descriptions of Calicut, Tuticorin and Goa. His accounts were made use of by the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris. Father Tieffenthaler (1710-1785) is the first geographer to draw up a rather accurate map of the Ganges. His greatest work "Historical, Geographical Description of India" contains accurate accounts about the Indian birds, trees, plants and flowers that he came across during the 29 years of his tour throughout the country, and also the result of the astronomical and geographical observations which he made during these wanderings. The Jaipur astronomical observatory still stands as a memorial of their work.

To the work done for the integration of cultures by the late historian, Father Henry Heras of Bombay, a handsome tribute was paid by the former Governor of Bombay, Dr. H. Mahtab. Father Louis Cardon, who had made a special study of the Chota Nagpur orchids, discovered the *Dendrobium Regium*, which secured a first prize and medal at the London Horticultural Show, and also another orchid new to science, which was named after him, *Microstylis Cardoni*. Of Father Lafont of St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, the well-known review *Nature* wrote that he was generally acknowledged as one of those res-

possible for the introduction of modern science into India. It is from him that Sir J. C. Bose received his early training.

The Contribution of Catholic Missionaries to Indian Culture and Indian Languages

A more signal contribution, however, has been made by Christian missionaries to the study of Indian languages and to cultures. They not only made Sanskrit and the classics to some extent known to Europe, but many of them mastered the Indian languages as well. They compiled grammars and dictionaries, and their exposition of Catholic doctrine represented the earliest prose works in the Indian languages. Here are some of the more outstanding names in this department that is essentially an Indian field of activity.

Sanskrit:

1. Fr. Giacomo Fenicio, 1558-1632 (cfr. Pamphlet of P. Ferroli—"Rays of Light", Suppl. January 1947) wrote "Livro da Seita dos Indo-Orientais", the first account of Hindu religion and customs ever written in a European language. Of this work Professor Charpentier says: "It betrays that scholarly spirit which is not always to be found even in later centuries."

2. Fr. Robert de Nobili (1577-1656), the first European Sanskrit scholar, and "a man" says Max Muller, "who could quote from Manu, from the Puranas, nay from the works such as the Apastamba Sutras, which are known even at present only to those few Sanskrit scholars who can read Sanskrit manuscripts, must have been far advanced in the knowledge of the sacred language and the literature of the Brahmins" (Lectures on the Science of Language, p. 167).

The only two Sanskrit works of his that have survived are: "An Epitome of the Doctrine of the True Religion" and "Refutation of Metapsychosis".

3. Fr. Henry Roth (1620-1668) made the Western world acquainted with the Devanagiri script. He wrote a Sanskrit grammar for Europeans, and also an account of the ten Avatars.

4. Fr. Ernest Hanscleden, alias "Arnos Padiri" (1689-1732), a Sanskrit scholar, with whom up to his time no European could compete, composed a Sanskrit grammar and a dictionary.

5. To Fr. Gaston Coeurdoux (1691-1777) belongs the

credit of having anticipated some of the most important results of Comparative Philology by at least 50 years.

6. Fr. John Francis Pons (1698-1753) "gives a most interesting, and in general, a very accurate description of the various branches of Sanskrit literature. He anticipated on several points the researches of Sir William Jones" (Max Muller).

Tamil:

1. Fr. Robert de Nobili, alias "Thathua Pothakar" (1577-1656) was one of the pioneers in the writing of Tamil prose. He enriched Tamil with many words and phrases adapted from Sanskrit. Works: "Athuma Nirunayam" (the science of the soul), "Gnana Upathesa Kandam" (a kind of Summa theologica) in 4 volumes, and "Thushana Thikkaram" (refutation of calumnies).

2. Fr. Constantius Beschi alias "Viramamunivar" (1680-1747). All Tamil scholars speak of his "Thembavani" in terms of the highest praise. He composed also three Tamil grammars and three dictionaries: Tamil-Latin; Tamil-Portuguese and Tamil-Tamil, the latter being the first of its kind. His prose works are mostly devotional and controversial. Beschi will always hold a conspicuous place in Tamil literature.

Malayalam:

1. Fr. John E. Hanxleden (1689-1732), alias "Arnos Padiri", composed a dictionary and a Malayalam grammar. According to Valiya Kovil Thampuram his "Parvangal" (treatises on the four last things) has been surpassed only by the "Bharatams" of Ezhutachan. His "Puthenpana" (life of Christ in 10,000 couplets) is even more famous among the Malayalis.

Telugu:

Fr. Peter Lalane (1669-1748) compiled a good grammar and a lexicon in Telugu.

Kannada:

Fr. Leonardo Cinnami (1609-1676) compiled a grammar and a dictionary in Kanarese.

Konkani and Marathi:

Fr. Thomas Stephens (1689-1732), the first Englishman to come to India, composed a Konkani grammar and is the

author of the well-known "Kristaun Puran", an epic in 11,000 stanzas, which competent scholars hail as a masterpiece of Marathi literature.

A Study of the Languages of Chota Nagpur:

The following list of the works published during the last decennia is a striking illustration of the studies made by missionaries concerning the dialects of Chota Nagpur:

Encyclopaedia Mundarica, by K. Hoffman, S.J., in collaboration with A. Van Emelen, S.J.—Vols. I to XIII have been published between 1930 and 1941. The letter S is completed, and p. 4,149 has been reached.

Mundar Grammar by J. Hoffman, S.J., Calcutta, 1903, 222 pages.

A Mundari Grammar with Exercises, Calcutta, 147 pages. It has lately been printed by the Bihar Government.

An Oraon-English Dictionary, by A. Grignard, S.J., in Roman characters, with numerous phrases, illustrative of sense and idiom, and notes on tribal customs, beliefs, etc., Vienna, 1924, 697 pages.

An English-Oraon Dictionary, compiled by several missionaries in collaboration. Edited by C. Blesses, S.J., Dharmik Sahitya Samiti, Ranchi, 1956, 178 pages.

A Grammar of the Oraon Language and A Study of Oraon Idiom—Calcutta, 1924, 311 pages.

A Simple Sadani Grammar, by P. S. Nowrangi, S.J., Ranchi, 1956, 166 pages.

A Dictionary of the Kharia Language: English-Kharia, by H. Floor, S.J., and V. Gheisens, S.J., Kharia-English by G. Druart, S.J., Calcutta, 1934, 125 pages.

The District Labour Association's Various Language Handbooks: Oraon (1926), Kharia, Mundari, Santhali, etc., compiled by various missionaries.

A Technical English-Hindi Glossary of general culture, with special reference to Christian Religion and Spirituality. Compiled by C. Bulcke, S.J., and Sah, S.J., Dharmik Sahitya Samiti, 1955, 511 pages.

Though this survey is restricted to Catholic missionaries, the Protestant missions too have considerable work in Indian languages to their credit.

Catholic Education in Rural India

As compared with the effort made by Catholic missions in urban areas, their work in rural India has attracted much less attention. And yet, far from the madding crowd, there are in secluded places missionaries who are carrying on unostentatiously the burden of a work that is truly national. There have been humble schoolmasters and devoted religious sisters who have taught and are teaching thousands of village-dwellers in their own mother tongue. It is precisely because they work so selflessly and the world has heard so little of them, that it becomes all the more necessary to draw public attention to their contribution to Indian education. This is the service that the Church renders to the poor, simple people who have often shown their gratitude in countless ways, but more particularly with that natural eloquence which wells spontaneously from a grateful heart. If the memory of these humble teachers lives in the affections of their pupils, it is, however, only more recently that some kind of public recognition has been accorded to their meritorious services. In his "History of the Expansion of Christianity" (Vol. VII, p. 296), K. S. Latourette has paid a tribute to those silent workers in the educational field in remote quarters of India:

"Although the majority of Christians," he says, "were from the lowest social strata, the literacy of Christian men was two and three-fourths that of the men in the population as a whole, and of Christian women ten times that of the entire country. . . . In the Madras Presidency schools were making a steadily increasing impact upon the education of women . . . and in the forefront of the 1930's six out of every ten girls attending secondary school in that political division were in Christian institutions."

To the aborigines of Chota Nagpur, the advent of "Libin Sahib" (Fr. Constantine Lievens, S.J.), in 1885, was the beginning of a new era. He not only showed them how to escape from the clutches of landlords and money-lenders, but he also picked out young men from among them for special tuition and training. He had soon a group of more than 200 educated schoolmasters and catechists, and had opened more than 100 schools.

In 1890, the Irish Loreto nuns arrived in Ranchi to take charge of the education of the girls. Some more missionaries

came from Belgium, and education made rapid strides: primary schools were opened everywhere, boarding schools were set up at the headquarters of each district, where a higher grade education was imparted to the best boys from the feeding schools. In Ranchi, a big central boarding school, which in 1903 eventually developed into St. John's High School, and, in 1945, into St. Xavier's College, was erected for the education of the more promising boys picked from all schools of Chota Nagpur. By 1892, the number of boys in this school had reached 200. But Fr. Lievens had overworked himself, and suffered a complete breakdown in his health, and died of consumption at the age of 37.

The Mothers Ursuline of Tildeneck joined in 1903, and almost immediately a native congregation "The Daughters of St. Anne" was founded, which recruited only the girls of Chota Nagpur. Within the space of 70 years, the Christian aboriginals of Chota Nagpur spread in the three dioceses of Ranchi (Bihar), Raigarh (Madhya Pradesh), and Sambalpur (Orissa), and they have at present 979 educational institutions of their own: 868 primary schools, with more than 27,000 children (16,500 boys and 10,500 girls); 71 middle schools, with more than 8,350 pupils (6,400 boys and 1,950 girls); 18 high schools, with more than 6,300 students (3,800 boys and 2,500 girls); 2 colleges of their own, or rather one, since the recognition of the Ursuline Convent College has been withdrawn, with 1,171 students (930 men and 241 women). They have 7 training schools, with 151 women and 52 young men. They have their own nurses' training course, with 43 girls, directed by the Medical Sisters of the Holy Family Hospital, Mandar. They have 8 industrial schools. Besides these institutions, they have their own religious noviciates, their own Seminary, their own press and their own bank. Among Adivasis we find lawyers, physicians, engineers, members of Parliament. They have their own headmasters and professors of divinity, and have had their own bishops and an archbishop.

Conclusion

It is only the narrowest bigotry to look upon all this vast achievement as a covert attempt to convert people to Christianity. We have nothing to conceal and nothing to extenuate. Catholic education in India, as much as in any other part of the world, is a demonstration of the faith that is in us, a faith in ideals that are imperishable, and that have the sanction of

eternal truths. This is tacitly assumed not by Catholics alone but by the thousands who have benefited and are still benefiting by Catholic education. In spite of all the campaign in Madhya Pradesh to discredit it, the demand for admission to Catholic institutions in all parts of India continues unabated. We shall always continue to rely on our own inner strength and inner certainty of ultimate triumph.

“Catholic institutions,” Pope Pius XI says in his Encyclical on Christian Education of Youth, “whatever their grade in the educational and scientific world, have no need of apology. The esteem they enjoy, the praise they receive, the learned works they promote and produce in such abundance, and, above all, the men, fully and splendidly equipped, whom they provide for the magistracy, for the teaching career, in fact every walk of life, more than efficiently testifies in their favour.”

CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN CULTURE

By

M. AROKIASWAMI

It is a fact accepted on all hands that of all the factors that go to bring culture or refinement to a people the most far-reaching is religion, since that alone permeates the innermost beings of men and transforms the exterior by first transforming the interior. That Christianity has played in this manner a fundamental role in moulding the culture of India cannot be gainsaid. Differences of opinion there may be over this or that point or over the general quantum of her influence in the evolution of Indian culture, but none can deny the powerful impact that Christianity in this land has been for at least 300 years on end.

An attempt is made in the following pages to show the exact nature of this contribution. Since, as pointed out above, religion plays a twofold part in evolving the culture of a people, our study will fall under two heads, (a) the internal and (b) the external influences. The first division will embrace (1) religion and (2) character and the second, the effects on society, (1) on social well-being, (2) on education, and (3) on letters.

I. (1) *On Religion*.—It was in the land of full-fledged Hinduism, the age-old product of the Vedic Yogis and saints, that Christianity settled in full force in the XVI century and began to effect conversions earnestly. It is often contended that in all these conversions there was scarcely any conversion of the heart or mind. Judging, however, from the one single fact that until recent times reconversions from Christianity have been nil or negligible, it ought to be said without doubt that Indian Christians had really become Christians at heart.

Christianity thus affected Indian religion directly. Though the number of conversions was not many in comparison with the country's population, and to this day Christians are but a

drop in the ocean of India's teeming millions, the influence of Christian principles made a direct sally on the established religions of India. It is wonderful how even at the doorstep of the Indian homeland Catholic religion influenced powerfully the evolution of the Vedantic philosophy of Sri Sankara in the IX century as also of the philosophies of Sri Madhava and Ramanuja in the XII and the XIII centuries. Against those who controvert this point I shall content in this short paper with quoting Dr. Burnell, the great Indologist:

"Patriotic Hindus will hardly like the notion that their great modern philosophers have borrowed from Christianity; but as they cannot give a historical or credible account of the origin of the Vedantic sects, there is more than a strong presumption in its favour, for these doctrines were certainly unknown to India in Vedic or Buddhistic times."¹

It is said that Hinduism was always self-contained and did not wait for Christian influences to formulate its philosophy. How then could we explain the obvious influence of Christianity on intellectual Hindus in the XIX century? Did not the great Ram Mohan Roy make a deep study of the Bible before he evolved his Brahmosamaj, and was not the religion of Maharisi Debendranath Tagore founded on the teaching of that same sacred book? This is what Babu Keshub Chunder Sen wrote of the Bible:

"It is to me a home of blessing to which I may ever retire; it is the word of life in which I find the echo of all I consider to be the most precious treasure of my life."

Swami Vivekananda's address at the Chicago Conference of the World Federation of Religions in 1893 is at once the measure of the Christian impact on Hinduism and of the consequent reaction.

Today Christian influence on Hindu ideals is quite on the cards. Our monastic idealism and the catching mysticism of a St. John of the Cross or a St. Theresa of Avila, the conception of "Our Lady" as the Mother of God and the colourful symbolism of the Catholic religion have never failed to strike the strongest chords of the Indian religions. Small wonder then if Ramakrishna Paramamsa went into a trance at seeing a picture of the Madonna. Christianity pleaded in particular for

¹ See quoted in Rice; Mysore Gazetteer, p. 481; see also Barthe, *Religions of India*, p. 211.

sincerity in thought in a world of insincerity and show, and it is a historical truth that costly sacrifices to the Hindu deities began steadily to be on the decline with the advent of the new religion. No one can deny that the Hinduism resuscitated by Paramamsa and Swami Vivekananda bears all the marks of the Christian contact, and the Mission they founded cherishes to this day an abiding admiration for Christian ideals and methodology.

(2) *On Character*.—Christianity stands for certain ideals—simplicity, honesty, orderliness, peace, love of labour and even more the love of neighbour—which have wrought fundamental changes on the character of the people. It is not contended that Christianity is the only religion which teaches these virtues, but that no religion has supported its teachings with greater living examples than Christianity has done here and everywhere. The poverty of the missionaries, their dresses and houses and the surroundings in which they live and move are sights too fascinating to be missed, while the schools and orphanages conducted by them remain standing monuments of their well-directed charity and neighbourly love.

T. W. M. Marshall in his *History of the Missions* said well and with meaning when he wrote:

“Christianity has laid powerful hold on many districts in the country and breathing its spirit into the patriarchal customs of the Hindus was producing a simplicity and holiness of life never perhaps surpassed except in the ‘reductions of Paraguay’.”¹

From the dawn of the XIX century the new life based on sound character began to take shape in India and the trust in God and hope in death, so characteristic of the Christian religion, are increasingly seen in Indian burial epitaphs—voices as though speaking from beyond the grave, an eloquent testimony of what has come newly into the Indian life. Hope in God gave the great bastion of self-reliance which made of cowardly men heroes in life's battles. Rev. A. J. McDonald commenting on this says:

“Nothing like this has been recorded in the West since the days of John Wesley.”²

II. (1) *On Social Well-being*.—It can never be denied that it was Christianity that first attacked caste and other evil customs

¹ Marshall: *History of the Missions*, p. 59.

² McDonald: *War and Missions in the East*, p. 42ff.

of Indian society like child marriage, widow non-marriage and the cruel custom of the wife burning herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. On this Mahatma Gandhi wrote the following:

"My fierce hatred of child marriage I gladly say is due to Christian influence. . . . Before I knew anything of Christianity I was an enemy of untouchability. . . . My feelings gathered momentum owing to the fierce attack from Christian sources on this evil."

Commenting on this state of mind of the "Father of the Nation", Dr. Stanley Jones says:

"He (Gandhi) was a Hindu and belonged to Hinduism, but nevertheless when you strip away all controversies between East and West and religion and religion we cannot help but recognise affinities he had with the faith in Christ."¹

St. Francis Xavier, justly styled as the "Apostle of India" was the first to begin conversion of men irrespective of caste, and when we remember the high nobility from which he descended his attitude strikes all the more. The very first question he put to the neophyte presented to him for baptism was "parangi kulam puguda venumo?" ("Wilt thou enter into the caste of the Pharangi?") To the caste-ridden South Indian Christianising was considered in those days as throwing oneself beyond the pale of caste and St. Francis was considered as the 'parapathiri' (the pariah priest). Thus it would appear that far from choosing the line of least resistance, conversions were effected in the face of caste opposition; and with every conversion thus effected a link in the chain of caste rigour was visibly broken. At the same time Christianity never bade farewell to accustomed social customs wherever they did not interfere with the practice of the religion, and Indian Christians remain to this day as much Indians as they are Christians.

It is only when looked at from this background that one will be able to properly estimate the services of Christianity to the so-called depressed classes. Christianity did not go to them because, as it often thought, others were not forthcoming to join its fold but because she wanted to help them out of their moral and social degradation. Not only caste men and casteless men exist to this day side by side in the same fold of Christian

¹ Jones: *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 76.

religion in every part of the country, but everywhere they have created an endless series of problems to the missionaries. It was under very trying circumstances indeed that Christianity tried to redeem these 'casteless' men and trained the high-born to respect the low-born.

Prohibition of child-marriage and encouragement of widow-marriage helped to raise the standard of women in India. Catholic missionaries have helped the cause of widows in marriages and provided houses where widows who did not or could not remarry could stay and spend their time usefully. The introduction of nunneries and convents helped the education of girls and prepared them in many cases for the religious life. Buddhism and Jainism had taken in women in holy orders, but neither worked the scheme with such elaborateness and for such varied purposes as Catholicism did in India. The numerous religious orders of women that Christianity initiated into our country in the last century were everywhere an example and a force to lift women from their accustomed work and social status. Much was done by way of educating women not only in the regularly instituted schools but also by more modest efforts made in what were called "bazaar schools" started by the London Mission and Baptist Mission societies. Nor were they satisfied with this. Wives of missionaries made regular visits of houses with a view to educate the women of the house. Round the year 1860 the talented Scottish missionary John Fordyce and his wife pierced the very zenanas with great success. This led to the rise of women missionaries alongside of the men missionaries. In 1902, for example, in Madras Presidency alone there were 248 women as against 301 men working as missionaries.

(2) *Education*.—Christianity took particular care of the youth of the country irrespective of sex and built for them numerous elementary, secondary and collegiate institutions all over the land. The historian of the beginnings of the modern system of education in India is apt to forget the yeoman service rendered by the Christian missionary in preparing the way for the incoming of the new system. It was St. Francis Xavier again who trailed the path in this direction by exhorting his companions to build a school in every village and these missionary schools became the pioneers of the modern system of education. Later missionaries taught the children in these schools not merely the three R's, but also such practical subjects

like "pilotage and other sciences" as is mentioned in a letter of the Jesuit Fr. Tachard to Chaise in the XVIII century.¹

That higher education came into force in this country long before the famous minute of Macaulay is seen in the existence of numerous Colleges in Goa, Angamalle, Cochin and Vaipin, and Cranganore as early as the XVI century. All these Colleges not only imparted education to their pupils but also took care to collect much matter in oriental knowledge. All of them possessed wonderful libraries, and Sardar Panikkar himself confesses to the great usefulness of these institutions.²

The role of Christian missionaries in educating the youth of India is well worth a volume and is dealt with separately in this book. Everyone is aware of the rightly founded impression that the education which these Christian institutions give is of the very best to be had. It may be that in spite of the large scale in which this attempt has been launched by Christian Missionary organizations illiteracy figures have not appreciably dwindled in the country. That is because the problem of Indian illiteracy is of a larger compass. Still it is obvious that this effort has been attended with remarkable success not only among Christians but even more among the others who are not Christians. If women in India are educated to any degree it is almost entirely due to the effort of the Christian missionary. The Hocking Report of 1932 gives us a picture of what Christianity has done in this direction:

<i>Missionary Institutions (Kind and number)</i>	<i>Percentage of like Institutions in India</i>
Women's Colleges	
13	50
Teachers' Training Schools	
67	50
Girls' High Schools	
101	45
Girls' Middle Schools	
197	30

The missionaries first blazed the trail and Government and other agencies caught up in due course. "Due to their (missionaries) effort alone primarily," says the same report, "it ceased to be dishonour for women to be instructed, and lastly

¹ Lettres Edifiantes, VI, p. 201.

² Panikkar: *Portuguese in Malabar*, pp. 210-11.

it became a title to esteem." ¹ The idea of teaching the teacher was first put into effect by the Christian missionary who from the days of St. Francis Xavier began establishing Training Schools for Teachers. The system of Boarding Schools first initiated by the Jesuits in India has now taken root in the country and is of great help in the formation of young minds and bringing them under the rod of discipline. The missionaries indeed ran schools to suit everyone's capacity and aptitude and to them goes the honour of running the first Industrial and Agricultural Schools in the country.¹

(3) *On Letters.*—The great problem of the first missionaries was neither their small numbers nor the development of their organisation. It was everywhere an intellectual conflict between their ideas and philosophy and those of the land of their adoption. More than all they had to grapple with the problem of its numerous languages. The enthusiasm with which they warmed up to the task of mastering them made them great literary scholars, poets and grammarians of India, particularly in its six language forms—Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, Telugu and Malayalam.

Rev. Thomas Stephens (1549-1619), a Jesuit—the first Englishman who landed in India—carved for himself an indelible niche in Marathi literature by his far-famed *Christian Purana* (the Christian Bible in Marathi verse form). In the same way, if not in a greater sense, Robert de Nobili (1577-1651), who became a linguist great equally in Sanskrit and Tamil, and Joseph Constantius Beschi (1680-1742), the author of the first modern Tamil grammar, dictionary and prose model, are names to be remembered for all times. De Nobili became the first European to study Sanskrit and carry the niceties of that language to the scholars beyond the seas. With the help of his knowledge in this language he delved deep into the philosophy of Hinduism and wrote many books on a comparative study of the Hindu and Christian philosophies. In all about 20 books are ascribed to his pen, which must have been a tremendous influence on the educated classes of India. The missionaries were perhaps the first to be influenced and many works in English soon appeared from their pen on Hindu, Parsi and Islamic systems of philosophy. The well-known book of Rev. Vaughan, *Trident, Crescent and Cross*, is a book which fully illustrates the point here referred to. De Nobili also knew

¹ Hocking Report (1932), p. 124.

Tamil very well and wrote complete treatises on subjects like God and the soul.

Still even his knowledge of this great language of the south was as nothing compared to that attained by Constantine Beschi in the same century. His *Magnum opus*, the *Tembavani* (lit. the unfading garland) is the greatest epic on the Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus and is considered by experts to this day as one of the best Tamil epics ever written. Beginning to learn that language when he was nearly 40, he attained such mastery in it that he could write no less than 13 works of immortal fame, 6 in poetry and 7 in prose, within hardly 6 years. He is considered by the Tamils as the person who was responsible for introducing the prose style in their language. The first Tamil grammar, as distinct from the ancient grammars, the first Tamil dictionary and the first Tamil novel were written by him—an achievement which is nothing short of a wonder in a foreigner. He was the great pioneer who showed the way to other well-known missionary scholars like Dr. Caldwell, who wrote for the first time a comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages, and Dr. G. U. Pope, who has equally immortalised his name by his translations into English famous Tamil works like *Tirukural*, *Tiruvassagam* and *Naladiyar*. Then came a series of Dictionary makers in Dr. Gundert who compiled the Malayalam Dictionary, Rev. Kittel, who was responsible for the first Kannada dictionary, Maffei, who made the Konkani dictionary and Rebeiro, who compiled the Konkani-Portuguese dictionary, all of which still hold the field as the best of their kind.

The greatest boon however which the missionaries gave to India lay in their introduction of the printing press. It is to be said to the credit of the Portuguese Jesuits that India owes her first printing press (which was set up in Goa in 1556-57) to them. Pure Tamil characters were cast for the press in Punnakayal on the coast of Tinnevely—the fourth press to be set up in India—in 1577 by the Jesuit lay brother, Joe de Faria (sometimes also called Joannes Gonsalves) and the *Flos Sanctorum* was the first to be printed in an Indian Vernacular in the same year. In the days of the Danish missionaries like Ziegenbalg at Tranquebar the printing press was further perfected.

It is wrong to say that the missionaries developed printing for purposes of their propaganda, since they seem to have used their presses for secular studies as well. The famous *Livro Da*

Seita Das Indias Orientalis of Fr. Fenicio, which has been ably edited by Prof. Charpentier, is the first great book in which a European writer converges his attention on the social history of India. Fenicio produced in this book a work of rare historical interest and he was followed by Fra. Paulino de San Bartolomeo and his famous *Systema Brahmanicum* and *Historico-Criticum Indicarum* which stand very high to this day in their respective fields of philosophy and history. That the work of Abbe Dubois on *Hindu Manners and Customs* is a classic of its kind is accepted on all hands today, and the reason is not far to seek. Missionaries were unprejudiced enquirers, and they had a singleness of purpose rarely to be equalled by men of the work-a-day world. Men of this calibre helped in a very material way our knowledge of India. Though some of them were casual historians, some were indeed historians of great merit. I shall confine myself just to one example. Dr. Claudius Buchanan, the Scotch Divine, who landed in Calcutta in 1797 came with the set purpose of studying India and produced ponderous volumes of knowledge, which are justly styled as *Christian Researches*. He entered into the study of our country with such interest that Rev. Kaye in his book *Christianity in India* comments on him as follows:

“Even the news of the death of his wife would not disturb his study of the Syriac language.”

One may be sure that this race is not yet extinct. Beginning with the researches of the Rev. Hosten, S.J., we pass on to those of the Rev. H. Heras of Bombay (whose death occurred recently). The Herasian researches in ancient Indian History and particularly in the civilisation of the Indus valley will ever remain a standing monument of the present-day Christian endeavour in the field of Indian culture. The crop of Indian Christian writers to which the earnest endeavour of the Christian missionary gave rise in its own turn is great and obvious. Beginning with the Rev. Thomas Paremekal of Malabar, who was perhaps the first Indian to go to the West, and his *Romayathirai*, this generation has gone on yielding works of great literary and historical merit in the writings of poets like Vedanayakam Pillai of Mayavaram and Inbakavi of Manapad, of scholars like Dewan Bahadur L. D. Swamikannu Pillai (famous for his volumes of the *Indian Ephemeris*), Dr. P. J. Thomas (sometime ago Economic Adviser to the Government of India) and M. Ruthnaswami, who has found a place in the galaxy of Catholic writers. The

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By

C. D. PINTO

In the summary of their recommendations, Part IV, Chapter III of the Report, the Niyogi Committee have stated *inter alia* that the use of medical or other professional services as a direct means of making conversions should be prohibited by law; rules relating to the registration of doctors, nurses and other personnel employed in hospitals should be suitably amended to provide a condition against evangelistic activities during professional services; it is the primary duty of Government to conduct orphanages, as the State is the legal guardian of all minors who have no parents or natural guardians. Government should lay down a policy that the responsibility of providing social services like education, health, medicine, etc. to members of scheduled tribes, castes and other backward classes will be solely of the State Government and adequate services should be provided as early as possible, non-official organizations being permitted to run institutions only for members of their own religious faith; a separate department of Cultural and Religious affairs should be constituted at the State level to deal with these matters, which should be in charge of a Minister belonging to a scheduled caste, tribe or other backward classes and should have specially trained personnel at the various levels; programmes of social and economic uplift by non-official or religious bodies should receive prior approval of the State; no non-official agency should be permitted to secure foreign assistance except through Government channels; those missionaries whose primary object is proselytization should be asked to withdraw.

At the outset it may be quite briefly explained that missionary activity flows from the very nature of the Church. Her Divine Founder commissioned His followers to go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. He spoke of countries that are white already to harvest, though the labourers be few. He spoke of sheep that have no shepherd, of sheep that

mandments, to attend church services. To be a Christian is to know Jesus Christ, to love Him and to build ourselves upon the model that He was. It involves an intimate relationship, an exchange of love between the human person of the believer and the divine person of Jesus.

Christ as an Ideal

Now of the millions who have accepted this theory of life, some have followed it to an eminent degree. They have said to themselves that Jesus Christ is the Ideal for us all, for every man. And they have set to work to realise it. He was poor, so they became poor; sinless, so they were careful to keep themselves from sin; devoted to the service of men, so they gave themselves to this service; generous to extreme, so they put no limit to their generosity; enduring insult and injustice without a murmur, so they, just to be like Him, though often they could not see the immediate good of it, endured without a murmur injustice and insult.

In the gospel according to St. Matthew we read that Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they presented to him all sick people that were taken with diverse diseases and torments and such as were possessed by devils and lunatics and those that had the palsy; and he cured them. And such people followed him from Galilee and from Decapolis and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from beyond the Jordan. We read further that having called his twelve disciples together, he gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal all manner of diseases and all manner of infirmities. These twelve he sent, commanding them in these words: Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And going preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely have you received; freely give. Do not possess gold nor silver nor money in your purses nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats nor shoes nor a staff. For the workman is worthy of his meat. At the same time, as reported by St. John, he told his disciples to lift up their eyes and see the countries. For they are white already to harvest. St. Luke says that the Lord appointed also other seventy-two disciples and sent them two

and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was to come. And he said to them: The harvest indeed is great but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he send labourers into his harvest (Luke X, 1-4).

After Christ rose from the dead, the eleven disciples—Judas was no more—went into Galilee unto the mountain where he had appointed, as St. Matthew narrates at the end of his gospel, and coming Jesus spoke to them, saying: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matthew, XXVIII, 18-20). Commenting on these words, a recent writer has remarked that in these few words, the word "all" occurs four times. Yes, it was to be all, but never a chiselling down. All power was given to him, all power in heaven and in earth. It was absolute. *All nations* had to be taught. His mission was universal. *All things* whatsoever He had demanded were to be taught and observed. *All his doctrine* was to be preserved, and not an iota lost. *All days* He would abide in the Church till the last doom, be its life and inner spirit.

From the foregoing it will be clear that the primary function of the Church is to preach the Gospel and the primary duty of every member of it to be the herald of that Gospel, whether he be a cleric or a layman. It will also be clear that, following the example of the Master who went about doing good, His followers have to do likewise and be engaged in what is nowadays generally called social welfare.

Social Justice and Charity

In the socio-historical plane, since individuals come together to form a society, the social virtues which are necessary to ensure healthy relations among individuals and groups must be such as to regulate their harmonious intercourse. The individual has certain fundamental and inalienable rights but, since he has to live in society, the society in some measure limits the exercise of these rights and imposes on him certain obligations, which pertain to the common good. Pope Pius XII has, in his directives to the Spanish Social Week, Seville (May 1956), clearly defined these obligations, which compendiously go by the name of social justice:

"There is nobody that does not deplore the evils for the community which arise from the attitude of a part of its members who want to live each for himself, and turn their back on the common interests.

"Social sense teaches individuals precisely the contrary. It makes them conscious of their social duties, it urges them to take into account in their activities their belonging to a community, to be preoccupied with the welfare of their neighbour and with the common good of society. It works on man's social conscience, and as a habit, it puts them in the condition necessary to reach the purpose which God and society expect from him."

(Cf. La Documentation Catholique, Paris, 8 July 1956.)

Social justice, however, alone would never achieve that harmony of relationships which is desirable if life is to be lived in peace and tranquillity. To bring about that unity and harmony of heart and mind in any given society, the virtue *par excellence* is charity. Charity which is the bond of perfection is the cementing and unifying principle which desires to give another the fulness of his due, over and above what is due by strict justice. It is the perfection of Christian endeavour to bring about that solidarity for which the human race craves, the solidarity which is centred in Christ through the Spirit.

Charity goes beyond justice inasmuch as it conceives its object, that is, the neighbour, as a brother and is based on the union between man and man, whereas justice is satisfied with regarding him as a separate individual whose personal dignity and rights are to be respected.

In his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, on the social order, written in commemoration of the fortieth year of another encyclical, the *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII, known as the Magna Charta of the working classes, Pope Pius XI states the necessity of the two virtues, justice and charity: "To that end all the institutions of public and social life must be imbued with the spirit of justice; and this justice must above all be truly operative, must build up a juridical and social order able to pervade all economic activity. Social charity should be, as it were, the soul of this order and the duty of the State will be to protect and defend it effectively." Again: "Mere sordid selfishness, which is the disgrace and the great crime of the present age, will be opposed in very deed by the kindly and forcible law of Christian moderation, whereby man is commanded to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, confiding in God's

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liberality and definite promise that temporal goods also, in so far as he has need of them will be added unto him. Now, on effecting this reform, charity, which is the bond of perfection, must play a leading part. How completely deceived are those inconsiderate reformers who, zealous only for commutative justice, proudly disdain the help of charity! Clearly charity cannot take the place of justice unfairly withheld. But, even though a state of things be pictured in which every man receives at last all that is his due, a wide field will nevertheless remain open for charity. For justice alone, even though most faithfully observed, can remove the cause of social strife but can never bring about a union of hearts and minds. Yet this union, binding men together, is the main principle of stability in all institutions, no matter how perfect they may seem, which aim at establishing social peace and promoting mutual aid. In its absence, as repeated experience proves, the wisest regulations come to nothing. Then only will it be possible to unite all in harmonious striving for the common good, when all sections of society have the intimate conviction that they are members of a single family and children of the same Heavenly Father and, further, that they are 'one body in Christ and everyone members one of another', so that 'if one member suffer anything, all members suffer with it'. Then the rich and others in power will change their former negligence of their poorer brethren into solicitous and effective regard, will listen with kindly feeling to their just complaints and will readily forgive them the faults and mistakes they possibly make. Workingmen too will lay aside all feelings of hatred or envy, which the instigators of social strife arouse as skilfully. Not only will they cease to feel weary of the position assigned them by divine Providence in human society; they will become proud of it, well aware that every man by doing his duty is working usefully and honourably for the common good and is following in the footsteps of Him who, being in the form of God, chose to become a carpenter among men and to be known as the Son of a carpenter."

Church and Social Welfare

What the Church has done for the social welfare of mankind throughout the ages in diverse ways is well known—by checking reckless greed, by asserting the dignity of duty and labour, by opposing to slavery the doctrine of the fraternity and equality of man, by upholding family life, by making obedience and government easy, by advocating justice in dealing with

modern labour problems, by combining social reform with moral, by championing the cause of the poor and the downtrodden. As it were, she created new men and filled them with new life. Even a casual reference to such a handy book as the Catholic Encyclopaedia will bear out the truth of all that the Church did in the Roman era and in the Middle Ages, and has been doing in the modern era, amongst the undeveloped peoples and amongst developed cultures.

In India the approach to the social question has not been merely intellectual. There has been the social uplift and welfare of the millions of outcasts who were considered by the ruling classes as the dregs of humanity. To their aid came the missionaries and for their succour they opened social and charitable centres. With the establishment of every new mission station and parish, there grew up alongside the school, the dispensary and the orphanage and, in the bigger centres, homes for the aged, the leprous, the defectives. In fact, the entire misery of human experience found comfort and solace in Catholic or Christian institutions.

This whole-hearted dedication is prompted by that Christian concept of charity which sees in the neighbour and suffering person Christ. This is well brought out by Christ himself, as St. Matthew reports: "Then the king will say to those who are on his right hand, come you that have received a blessing from my Father, take possession of the kingdom which has been prepared for you since the beginning of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you brought me home, naked and you clothed me, sick and you cared for me, a prisoner and you came to me. Whereupon the just will answer, Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and fed thee or thirsty and gave you to drink? When was it that we saw thee a stranger and brought thee home or naked and clothed thee? When was it that we saw thee sick or in prison and visited thee? And the king will answer them. Believe me, when you did this to one of the least of my brethren here, you did it to me" (Mat. XXV, 34-40).

Works of Mercy, Corporal and Spiritual

Other passages could be cited from the Bible, which stress the Christian's duty to help the sick and the suffering, the needy and the destitute, the aged and the infirm, the widowed and the orphaned. Indeed, the Church enjoins seven corporal works of mercy to be performed for one's neighbour: to feed the

hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned, bury the dead, just as she enjoins seven spiritual works of mercy—to convert the sinner, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, bear wrongs patiently, forgive injuries, pray for the living and for the dead.

The purpose for which those who devote their lives to works of charity is twofold, their own sanctification through union with Christ by helping one of his members and the building up of the body of Christ through union among the members themselves.

Catholic institutions for relief are, as a rule, founded for all alike. There is no distinction. It is certainly against Christian charity to deny entrance to one who is not a Christian and morally wrong and sinful to force one to change his religion when conviction is not there.

Mr. J. N. Farquhar in his book "Modern Religious Movement in India" (Macmillan & Co.) has well brought out the inspiring and revolutionizing influence of Christian social and charitable institutions in the Hindu social upheaval.

The Indian social movement is the outcome of Christian missions and the Western influence; and all communities have felt the impact in a greater or lesser degree. Throughout the whole history, Christian teaching, effort and example have done more than anything else to quicken the movement.

Even then there are organizations working in the social field which have not fully grasped the true spirit of relief. The Advisory Committee on Social and Moral Hygiene, Central Social Welfare Board, Government of India, appointed in December 1954, report that they were greatly disturbed by the vast majority of Hindu and Arya Samaj Homes both in the North and in the South. "They are being run for destitute women and those who have been rescued from immoral surroundings. These are homes where the basic principles of rescue homes and the correct psychological approach to disturbed persons are not understood in the slightest degree." On the other hand, "the Order of Nuns and the Roman Catholic Orphanages (both foreign and local) are doing an excellent work in rescue and rehabilitation of these unfortunate babies and unmarried mothers".

Similarly, one who stated that he was a Protestant and a member of the Church of England wrote to *The Pioneer* of Allahabad: "It is hard to believe that it is possible, but there are in a Calcutta Home at the present time 167 inmates, who are housed, fed and cared for and, when ill, are medically treated

in the infirmaries of the Home. It is quite a pleasure to visit the Home and to see the happy expression on the old people's faces, and the clean, well-ordered dining rooms and dormitories, with the clean bed linen, pillow-cases and coverlets. Naturally one's first idea is that it is impossible that all this can be done without an income of some kind, and yet it is an absolute fact."

Another fact which greatly surprised the writer is that, though the Sisterhood is a Roman Catholic one, it is catholic or universal in every sense. It does not matter whether the applicant for admission is a Protestant, Nonconformist, Hindu or of any other creed. All are taken and all receive exactly the same treatment.

These institutions are usually opened in places where Catholics are many, also in places where the people have solicited the authorities of the Church to found them. The motive imputed to the starting of these works, as in the Niyogi Committee Report, is conversion. Let the Holy Father himself speak in explanation and in defence. In the Encyclical *Evangelii Praecones*, previously referred to—the whole will repay perusal—he said: "We also wish at this point to pay the highest tribute of praise to the care taken of the sick, the infirm and afflicted of every kind; We mean hospitals, leprosaria, dispensaries and homes for the aged and for maternity cases and orphanages. These are to Our eyes the fairest flowers of missionary endeavour; they give Us, as it were, a vision of the Divine Redcemer Himself, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed."

Again, "However, the brothers and nuns who feel that they are called to undertake such work must, before leaving their country, acquire the professional training and knowledge which are today required in these matters. We know that there are nuns with full professional qualifications who have earned well merited recognition by the special study of loathsome diseases, such as leprosy, and by discovering remedies for them. These and all other missionaries who are giving their service so generously in leper hospitals have Our paternal blessing and their exalted charity compels Our admiration and praise."

And a little further: "To you, Venerable Brethren, who labour so well in the Catholic mission fields, is given the task of carefully putting these ideals and aims (of social reforms and social justice) into practice. Ever keeping in mind special circumstances and varying conditions of time and place, take counsel together in your Bishops' meetings, in your synods and other gatherings and strive by all possible means to establish

those sound welfare associations, organizations and societies which the present time and the modern mind seem to demand. Your pastoral office certainly requires this, lest the flock entrusted to you be led astray from the right path by passion and by new errors disguised as truth and justice. In this task let the missionaries who are your co-operators distinguish themselves in promoting this apostolate. Thus they can be sure that it will not be said to them: 'The children of this world are wiser . . . than the children of light'. It will, moreover, prove helpful if they, whenever possible, gather round themselves qualified Catholic laymen of outstanding character and practical ability, who can take up and advance these works."

Inhuman Treatment

There are many aspects of the social question too numerous to be treated. Take the case, for instance, of the classes known once as depressed. As far back as 1935, the late Dr. Ambedkar, in his presidential address to the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference held at Yeola (Nasik District) after narrating the inhuman treatment meted out to them by Caste Hindus, advised them to sever their connection with Hinduism and to embrace any other religion, but warned them to be very careful in choosing the new faith, to see that equality of treatment, status and opportunities would be guaranteed them unreservedly. He referred them to the treatment accorded in other religions, such as Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. Further he said, "Because we have the misfortune of calling ourselves Hindus, we are treated thus. If we were members of another faith, none would dare treat us so. Choose any religion which gives an equality of status and treatment. . . . I had the misfortune of being born with the stigma of an Untouchable. However, it is not my fault; but I will not die a Hindu, for this is in my power". He died a Buddhist.

Mr. Ramchandra Setwajee Neckaljay likewise said in the presidential address he delivered to the All-India Depressed Class Conference at Amraoti, Berar, in April 1930, "The cry of the dumb millions of India, expressed socially, economically, politically and religiously for centuries has reached the throne-seat of the Creator of the Universe. It looks as if that cry has been heard by Him, the Father of Mankind. He in His solicitude for His children . . . has brought about a change in the atmospheric conditions of India and has found them a voice to express, nay, to denounce the atrocities perpetrated in the

name of religion by the so-called High-Class Hindus for centuries. . . . India has seen every sort of government, but till the British came, we, the Untouchables, had absolutely no voice of our own. . . . Such sort of mentality of keeping all that is best for oneself is not peculiar to India. Such mentality is found in the West as well as in the East. Neither is it peculiar to any century or country. . . . In Europe also the strong had oppressed the weak and enslaved them to servitude. Luckily for the slaves, for the serfs and for the oppressed, the religion of Christ, born in Asia, went over to Europe instead of to Asia and levelled down all imaginary and artificial distinctions based on one's birth".

One of the chapters of the Niyogi Committee Report is devoted to the castes and tribes of Madhya Pradesh, as missionary activity there was confined mostly to members of certain tribes. Subsequent chapters deal with the missions working amongst them and the history of their advent and progress amongst these adivasis. Mention is also made of the special provision made in the Constitution of India for the protection of these tribes by reason of their backwardness. Under Article 46 of the Constitution, the State is directed to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. In pursuance of these obligations, the Government of Madhya Pradesh have created a separate Tribal Welfare Department which has prepared a scheme for the uplift of aborigines. The main features of this scheme are to look after the educational and other needs of the aborigines so as to bring them on a par with other people. Government approved a scheme, the total estimated cost of which was Rs. 169.60 lakhs in the First Five-Year Plan. It was introduced in December 1952 and 40 centres were established each providing for various facilities and services. It would be very interesting and instructive to know the results of this ambitious programme.

Long in the field before this were, however, the Christian missionaries. The Niyogi Committee cannot altogether shut their eyes to that fact. In one short paragraph they admit that their contribution to the shaping of Indian life has, indeed, been very impressive. Apart from the controversy on the point of proselytization, they merit, they say, high appreciation as pioneers in the fields of education and medical relief.

Birth of a Mission

A survey of the work done among the tribals of Chota Nagpur may supply an answer to some of the statements made in the Report, as for instance, that the missionaries were giving material help in order to cause a mass movement towards Christianity.

The Catholic missions in Chota Nagpur began about 1885-6 when Rev. C. Lievens, S.J., discovered that the poor aboriginal was being exploited by Rajahs and Zamindars, while the laws of the land which gave them an instrument to redress their grievances was in practice not available to them due to their backward condition. The administration winked at the most perverse injustices. It was only when Fr. Lievens, filled with the charity of Christ and a true love of justice, took up their cause that a ray of hope shone in the lives of these aboriginals.

He made himself thoroughly acquainted with the mentality of the people and gained knowledge of their grievances. From a chief of the native police, who was a Hindu of good caste, in particular, he obtained much inside information on the customs and troubles of the tribals, the injustices they suffered not only from the zamindars and landlords, who had robbed them of much of their land, but even from the unscrupulous Indian officials. The chief told him that, if he could fight their oppressors at law and gain their rights, he would win their hearts. He only did what other great lovers of humanity have done; he upheld justice and restored to the aboriginal that human dignity which is essential for the full growth of the human personality.

With the knowledge that there had arisen one to champion their rights, thousands flocked to him with their grievances. He told them he had come for the eternal welfare of their souls. Nevertheless he thought he could help them in their temporal affairs as well, if he could trust them strictly to follow his advice. After he had made a careful study of the grievances and assured himself of the justice of the complaints, he took a few cases to the court of the British judge at Ranchi and won them. Other cases followed and in each he was successful. The result was magical. The downtrodden peasantry realized that at last they had found a defender, who was more than an equal of the most astute landlord. What wonder, then, that he gained their hearts and made them listen willingly to the spiritual truths he taught them? They spontaneously solicited instruction. They accepted the faith willingly and eagerly

and found therein the solace and peace for which they had yearned. Let a Christian adivasi speak for himself, as quoted by Simon Bara in his *Aboriginals and Missionaries* (Light of India Series No. 40): "Really, to accuse our missionaries of being bumbledooks looks like libelling them. Sarat Chandra Roy, who knew Chota Nagpur like his pocket, never ceases repeating in all his books that the Catholic missionaries have refrained from interfering with the tribal customs and tribal amusements, that they have introduced changes only where moral or religious principles strictly required alteration and that they took great care to provide substitutes for anything that had to be scrapped. Our missionaries are neither cranks nor kill-joys; they are level-headed men, quite human and love to see us happy; they do not interfere with the joys of life. Nowhere is the Catholic religion a gloomy religion, least of all in the land of the sunny-tempered Oraons. Our Christian religion has not demoralized us; it has not destroyed our tribal solidarity nor suppressed our old panchayats nor has it forbidden the joys of feasting, the decorations and romance of communal life. As of old we do drum and dance and sing and rejoice and our village life is neither drab nor dull."

The flow of would-be converts steadily increased and to such an extent as to startle Fr. Lievens himself. "Why do they come?" he wrote, "I do not know myself and often feel sad at the thought that my own shortcomings must be a hindrance to still further conversions." "I am not a saint," he would often say, "to work like St. Francis Xavier and perform miracles to bring souls into the Church. My method is to help people in their difficulties and God desires me to save them in this manner."

Soon in 1887 the difficulties of coping with as many as 10,000 catechumens reached a critical stage. How to instruct them? There was no question here of a temerarious or premature movement from the side of the Christian missionaries; instead of multiplying stations, they had concentrated their forces. But the whole country round Torpa came spontaneously to Torpa. Mgr. Goethals appealed to the Provincial for reinforcements in these words: "It seems to me that our mission has reached a crisis. The reason is that the number of men we have at our disposal is altogether out of proportion with the work forcibly imposed upon us. The situation in Chota Nagpur is altogether exceptional on account of a movement truly Providential by which these people are drawn in favour of Catholicism. *We have not created this movement*

(italics ours), but we should not arrest or limit it. It would be a thousand pities not to profit by the occasion, to save thousands of souls which Providence seems to have thrown into our arms."

Co-operative Movement

Hand in hand with evangelism went economic and social welfare. In 1909, the mission authorities founded the Catholic Credit Co-operative Bank for the benefit of the people. It was a great boon to them and, in 1924, the amount of loan money in the hands of the aboriginal borrowers was about Rs. 1,20,000 and the paid-up interest by these about Rs. 10,000. It was pointed out at the meeting amidst applause that no less than Rs. 60,000 would have had to be paid as interest, if the bank did not exist and loans were to be obtained from mahajans or money-lenders, a net saving, therefore, in one year of Rs. 50,000 to the aboriginal community. These loans were taken yearly for productive purposes, such as purchase of cattle, purchase of land, redemption of land, improvement of land and setting up and developing trade. The Bank is still flourishing today and loans are increasing in proportion with the money deposited. It is managed by the aboriginals themselves, under the supervision of the missionaries.

Alongside the Bank, there have been operating the Catholic Co-operative Stores Societies which, like the Bank, were owned and managed by the Christians under missionary direction. These Societies unfortunately have not survived the competition of local traders.

Further, agricultural lectures are arranged with the co-operation of the Agricultural Department. At the Bank meeting in 1925, the Agricultural Inspector, who had been deputed to give a lecture to the 1,200 delegates assembled, did more than this; he placed at their disposal, free of cost, 10,000 lbs. of two better kinds of rice seeds for experiment and added that the Government would follow this up with a free grant of artificial manure. This fact indicates that the missionaries wish to co-operate with the Government in its task for the advancement of all sections of the community. It also indicates the confidence they wish to instil into their Christians that the Government is there to help them.

In Jaipur and Udaipur there have existed Mutual Aid Societies, but these are owned and managed by the tribals themselves.

Who will deny the right of any community to seek to better itself? This is in no way intended to be a "subtle device to win converts" but a legitimate organization for the betterment of a section of the community. It is intended for moral and spiritual gain. This is in no way exclusive to mission countries. All over the world, Catholic communities band together in parishes under the inspiration and direction of the parish priest and form such societies. In America, North and South, in Canada, in Belgium, France, Italy, in fact in all Catholic 'communities' there flourish such organizations.

One may object that such work is strictly outside religion and hence outside the competence of the priest. In reality, it is not so. Pius X exhorted priests in this all-important duty: "Let the clergy exert itself to improve, within the limits of justice and charity, the economic condition, too, of the people, favouring and promoting all institutions that lead thereto" (in his Encyclical *Il Fermo Proposito*). He is also reported to have said in a private audience to Abbe Francois of the diocese of Cambrai in March 1907: "Tell your venerable Archbishop of the great satisfaction which I derive on learning that he has appointed two priests to devote themselves particularly to the farmers and their labourers. It is my wish that matters which interest the peasantry be as well known by rural clergy as their theology. They can never do too much to show how the Church loves the working classes." His successor, Benedict XV, in his Letter to the Bishop of Bergamo, was very explicit on this matter: "Now it is the duty of priests and particularly of pastors, co-operating zealously under your leadership, and with united efforts among themselves, to combat vigorously such pernicious enemies of Catholic and civil society. Let no one of those think that there is question here of an activity foreign to the sacred ministry because it has to do with economics, for it is in this social question that the eternal salvation of souls is imperilled. Wherefore, we desire that they hold it as their duty that they must dedicate themselves, as much as they possibly can, to the theory and practice of social works, by way both of study and of action, and to help and co-operate in every way with those who are worthily working in our organizations."

Tribal Transformation

The Niyogi Committee mentions labour bureaus in Ranchi. A labour bureau was opened, because it was found that many, due to the privations and the inadequacies of their lands,

way harm the drinker or prevent him from fulfilling the obligations of his state of life, as a father of family, a worker, etc. But from its very inception the Chota Nagpur mission tried to remedy the evils of drink prevalent at the time. Very early it formed a temperance society to wean them away from this. A communication by a missionary to the Home journal intended for private circulation, will give the spirit of the movement in Ginabahar: "Another campaign is on, viz. against 'Battighars'. As 'daru' is one of the greatest enemies, the Fathers may rejoice in having already succeeded in ruining and abolishing two Battighars. Others, they hope, will soon follow suit."

The above should be sufficient to refute the allegations of the Committee, and this short account may well be closed with the words of the Catholic adivasi who was quoted before: "But the greatest gift to us is that of true religion. To them (the missionaries) we owe it that no longer we walk in fear of witches and evil spirits and that we try to live by a nobler and purer moral code. Perhaps the sacred name of Christ our Lord had better be left out of this discussion, which does not directly refer to other wordly and supernatural values. But the fact is, and I must be allowed to state here, that among the missionary benefits to us, this one we value above all, viz. that they have taught us to know and love Christ, the light of the World, the way, the truth and the life."

Jashpur Movement

In 1906, following the lead given by the Oraons of Chota Nagpur, those of Jashpur State, referred to above, began their move towards Christianity. Deputations representing about 6,000 of them solicited the Fathers to come to them. The first step was at once met by a counter-stroke of the Rajah of Jashpur, instigated by the zamindars or landlords who did not like to lose their grip on these people. Though the missionary was not granted permission to reside but could only enter, in spite of vexations of all kinds, conversions began and the number of converts rose high. One may ask what methods were followed to bring these crowds to Christ.

Let one of the missionaries say his say: "I am amongst Oraon animists, an aboriginal tribe of about 1,500,000 individuals. Their lot is a hard one, as the zamindars or landlords consider them as mere instruments to increase their wealth and do not care for the welfare of these low caste people.

Ignorance and oppression, adverse climatic conditions, the nature of the soil, all these make their livelihood very precarious. Their animist beliefs show one good God, too good to be feared, but also millions of evil spirits who are supposed to be the cause of every evil.

"The Oraons' need of help and advice is too frequent for them not to be influenced by a well organized and well provided mission station. Security, poverty, law-suits, medicines, protection, employment are a few of the occasions where, but for the missionary's help, the Oraon would be helpless. Many also are the Christians who, going in quest of new lands and fields, unconsciously prepare the way for the missionary in places still unconverted. Sooner or later, they will come to the conclusion: 'So many have become Christians! Why not our village?' And sometimes several villages at a time come and ask to be received. Why? Because of the missionary faith? Nothing of the kind. Only because of his advice, his paddy banks, his co-operative society, his dispensary, his labour office and so on.

"But, then, what does conversion mean? Where does religion come in? Once they come to the missionary and give their name, they call themselves Christians (even before baptism). This brings the obligation of public prayers, Sunday's rest and the rest; they are enrolled in the existing organizations, brought in contact with other converts. But, chiefly, at once efforts are made to group the young men, the boys, and instruct them. The mind of the younger people is wonderfully open to Christian ideas; easily they grasp the chief truths of the faith and understand the necessity to stick to it if they want to raise themselves out of abject ignorance and slavish oppression. Once a nucleus of these boys is instructed, ready for the sacraments, the village is secured. I dare say these young men will by their example, their conduct, neutralize all effort to stay progress. In many instances, they set teaching the children themselves; they even tried to start an evening school!

"Now begins the slow and patient work of total conversion of the village, the old people always being left to the end. The very method which brought the people to Christianity is also the best way to keep the old men in hand and slowly bring them to adopt Christian ways. The social works are like golden chains, which keep them steady; only give the missionary time to let divine grace penetrate their minds. A day then comes when they themselves tell you, 'Father, we have been so long Christians by name only; we want to become so in fact and

receive the sacraments'. This mixture of religion and social training makes the whole thing work smoothly. Each village has its advisers and each group of villages again forms a circle, whose advisers meet once a month and send as delegates some members to the central panch, which gathers every month at the mission station. Three times a year, there are also big gatherings, where questions of general interest are discussed, rules framed, customs approved and the like.

"To instil a real religious spirit and piety, the method is one of details. Organize frequent communion which teaches them the road to the Church. Make service attractive. Push the practice of First Fridays (a special devotion). In your sermons insist on the importance of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and not once but thrice and four times preach on the same subject. Teach them the Real Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Never receive in the bungalow anyone who has not first visited the Divine Master. . . ."

It is very regrettable that the Niyogi Committee did not give "deep thought and study" to this subject and to the factual information supplied to them, for example, in the case of Jashpur and Udaipur. Instead, they started with the preconceived idea that conversions resulting from corporate movements are not genuine. They were confirmed in that prejudice by manifestos from missionary-haters and by one-sided reports of some British political officers.

Firm in their Faith

An authentic incident may help to refute the Committee's sweeping assertion that conversions of Tribals are all insincere and that the converts do not know what they do. At the time of the passing of the Anti-Conversion Act of Udaipur in 1946, enquiries were made in villages to find out who were Christians and who were not. A police officer went to a village of Christians, took down their names and said: "The day after tomorrow you must all go to Dharmjaigarh to appear before my superior officer." On their arrival here, the latter catechized them:

Q. "Why have you had yourselves inscribed as Christians?"

A. "Because we are Christians."

Q. "But all the people of the country ought to be Hindus. Why have you not inscribed yourselves as Hindus?"

A. "Because we are not Hindus."

- Q. "Has the Father informed you about our Conversion Act?"
 A. "He has informed us."
 Q. "Do you know you can be fined Rs. 1,000?"
 A. "We know all that. We are Christians and we shall remain Christians. We are ready to die for our religion."

This retort brought the incident to an end. Several years earlier the tribals of that village had gone to Kurdeg, at least 60 miles away to have themselves inscribed as Christians and had not received a pie in the shape of a loan or otherwise.

Yet another incident, this time to Surguja, and a tragic one. A Christian got involved in a case on a false charge, the sentence for which was to be six months' jail. The tahsildar said to him privately: "If you give up Christianity you will not be condemned." The Christian replied, "I am a Christian and I shall remain a Christian. Send me to jail." Many similar incidents could be related especially during the hectic campaign of terrorizing carried on in 1953-54 and known to the Committee. In spite of untold hardships and without any hope of material advantages, for the loans were entirely discontinued, they have for the last 12 years remained faithful to their religion.

We may give here the statistics of Catholic social and charitable works in India in 1954 at the time the Committee was formed. The figures speak for themselves:

Orphanages	...	389	Boys 8,251; Girls 15,776.
Schools for Defectives	...	2	Inmates 88.
Creches	...	57	
Hospitals	...	87	Number of Beds 1,383 (4 not recorded).
Leprosoria	...	7	Number of Inmates 160 (5 not recorded).
Dispensaries	...	439	
Homes for the Aged	...	51	
Homes for the Poor	...	20	
Refugee Homes	...	9	
Boys' Town			
(non-sectarian)	...	1	
Homes for Aged			
Widows	...	5	
Homes for the			
Disabled	...	1	
Co-operatives	...	9	(Many not recorded).

Laymen and Charity

It is not only priests and nuns who are engaged in social and charitable activities. There are lay people as well who actively participate in the apostolate of the hierarchy, known as Catholic Action, which is outside and above all party politics. There are many organizations of the laity which practise Christian charity, irrespective of race and creed, even here in India, in several centres. We may describe one such, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It was founded in 1833 by eight Parisian students; today it has spread all over the world. It is not a mere philanthropic institution for, as the chief founder said, "philanthropy is a vain woman who likes to deck herself out in her good works and admire herself in the glass, whereas charity is a mother whose eyes rest lovingly on the child at her breast, who has no thought of self but forgets her beauty in her love". In fact, among the virtues which this society of charity aims at, such as self-denial, prudence, the active love of one's neighbour, zeal for the salvation of souls, brotherly love, no mean place is assigned to meekness and humility. In its early days, it was unknown and for a long time it preferred to remain in the same obscurity. Not only did it deem it contrary to its custom to make known to the public the alms distributed among the poor, to issue reports or financial statements, but it even hesitated to solicit any alms beyond the circle of those intimately acquainted with it. Subsequently it became necessary to publish statements to place before the eyes of all the uses to which the means confided to its care had been dedicated. More detailed reports were drawn up to expose the object of the meetings and to attract to them those who had shown inclination by the sympathies of their hearts and the ardour of their faith, always, however, without catering to personal vanity.

The Society is composed of Christian laymen living in the world and desiring their sanctification by means of charitable works. Although its especial work is to visit poor families in their homes, the members visit hospitals, prisons and similar institutions, distribute wholesome literature, instruct and educate the young, look after the aged and the destitute, the deaf and the dumb, the leprosy-stricken in suitable homes, find work for the unemployed, run economical kitchens and so on. There is no distinction of persons or creeds in the distribution of reliefs. The point is that it is laymen, not priests and missionaries, who do this for love of God and man.

The smallest unit of this organized Society is called a conference. In India, according to the Report of 1955, there are 390 conferences on the roll and 301 reporting conferences with a total active membership of 3,470. The number of families adopted for weekly relief was 5,363, the number of individuals assisted was 23,969, that of non-Christians assisted was 13,651.

New Sphere of Action

A truly wakeful charity will find today one sphere of action of particular importance, that of State-controlled justice. As pointed out recently by a writer, already the totalitarian monster which wishes to reduce men to mere names on a file is on the prowl around us. But there is still time to insist that State service is made for man rather than man for State service. There is still time to humanize the working of the social machine, to insist that the individual human person should be the centre of all social activity. But is not this contact with a man's person the essential aim of Christians, nay, of all charity? Far from grumbling at the new structures which are appearing in the contemporary world, we should see to it that our charity today manifests itself according to the measure of the modern world. Let our charity take its place among the elements which combine in the building of social justice, let it insist that no institution of social justice should forget that it is made for men and that in no case should files, forms, balance sheets and administrative requirements weigh more than the tears of the orphan and widow, the suffering of the invalid, the hardship of the distressed. Faced with the technique of State service, charity should hold primacy among free and self-relying citizens.

THE HINDU AND THE TRIBAL

By

M. HERMANN, S.V.D.

The Niyogi Report, in its Chapter on "Castes and Tribes of Madhya Pradesh", charges the missionaries with blighting deliberately the natural florescence of Hinduism among the aboriginal tribes of Madhya Pradesh and elsewhere. It is inferred that Hinduism had its roots in the very hearts of the aborigines, while the missionaries are pictured as spreading among them a mysterious disease called "Separatist Tendencies". Very subtly it is intended that the reader shall draw two conclusions: Firstly, that all aborigines are basically Hindus who are not to be disturbed; secondly, that missionaries hinder the natural development of Hinduism by suggesting to them that they are not really Hindus at all.

In an attempt to prove the first of these assumptions—that of Hindu aborigine identification, a book, "The Aborigines—So-Called—and Their Future" by Dr. G. S. Ghurye is cited. From cleverly selected quotations of English Census Commissioners, Dr. Ghurye concludes that there was so much *similarity* between the Hindu religion and the animistic tribal religions that they could not possibly be distinguished from one another. After attempting to discredit the Aborigines' claims of racial integrity, he concludes that "the so-called Animists and Aborigines are best described as 'Backward Hindus'" (G. S. Ghurye, "The Aborigines—So-Called—and Their Future", pp. 7 & 24).

The main objection to Ghurye's and the Niyogi Committee's assertion that all Aborigines are Hindus appears to be the widespread denial of this thesis by so many of the usually polite and docile Aborigines themselves. If they had only been forthright in admitting their Hinduism, the unpleasant necessity of relying on the testimony of English Census Commissioners would have been avoided. There is truly a great mystery in this reluctance of the Aborigines to declare them-

selves Hindus, but the Niyogi Report has solved it very simply, by announcing that it is the Christian missionaries who are depriving the Aborigines of their Hindu heritage. Hence it is necessary for the reader, who is uninitiated in the Niyogi Report style of argument, to give fuller consideration to these two startling assertions and ask himself whether they are proved by the simple assertion: "It is not easy to find any sound reason for isolating the tribal people from the Hindus in view of the repeated admissions made that the animistic or tribal religion was hardly distinguishable from the Hindu religion. The mystery is solved when we come to examine the Missionary activities within these tribal areas" (N.R., p. 29/18).

In addition to the opinions of the Census Commissioners extracted from Ghurye's work, there is an attempt by the Niyogi Report to create the impression that all aboriginal claims of racial integrity are completely obliterated by the extent of inter-marriage between Aryans and non-Aryans (N.R., 26/9). In substantiation, the Report quotes M. M. Kunte's thesis "The Vicissitudes of Indian Civilization", 1880, and Mr. Kunte's chief source is found to be the "Mahabharat". It suffices to say here that the "Mahabharat" is not generally accepted by scholars as an historical source but as a beautiful myth or legend. In the same thesis, the outlandish remark is made that the Nishadas were included in the Pancha-Janah. The Pancha-Janah, having nothing to do with *caste*, comprised the five *clans* of the Aryans. To belong to it, one obviously had to be a pure Aryan, a son of Pandu. Obviously, not even the Sudra could be considered a member, to say nothing of the Nishada.

Different Racial Types

The fact that since the Vedic time, "Aryans" and "non-Aryans" intermingled by inter-marriage and that some Aborigines were Hinduised by acculturation does not at all nullify the other fact that the present Aborigines are completely different in race and culture from the modern Hindu, but it confirms that these clear distinctions between them have existed since time immemorial. Scholars dealing with the physical anthropology of India (e.g. H. Risley, R. Chanda, J. H. Hutton, B. S. Guha, etc.) unanimously admit that there are different racial types among the Indian population which are clearly distinguishable. The authors differ in their nomenclature only. Ghurye himself classifies the main races of India following the linguistic aspect (*Castes and Race in India*, p. 104) whilst in

Brahma. The opposite attitude is Pantheism, holding that the Universe becomes divine. Both these theories accept that this ultimate cause is *anatman*, impersonal. In consequence they do not postulate the existence of a personal human soul or any personality because *anatman* is the only reality. This does not exclude that certain sects have monotheistic tendencies proclaiming their favoured deity as the supreme one; e.g. Vishnu for the Vaishnavites, Shiva for the Saivites, Rama for the Ramandhi-sect. But the large masses of the people are more or less polytheists, believing in many deities and are very afraid of the malevolent ones. Similarly, they are in great fear of evil spirits. Their main aim, therefore, is to appease these enemies. So, magic and superstition play a very important role in their whole life. Nevertheless many among the simple people have a strong belief in a benign Supreme Being. All these different religious attitudes accept the typical Hindu pantheon with its prominent deities like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, the many petty gods of nature and villages, the influential goddesses like Shakti and Mata, foremost Shiva's Shakti Parwati-Durga-Kali, Vishnu's Female Energy Lakshmi, and Brahma's Female Saraswati; and the innumerable hosts of spirits, ghosts, demons, heroes and saints, etc.

Its fundamental social basis is the very complicated caste system with its many laws and rites. Sadhus, Sanyasis, and ascetics do not become casteless when they embrace an ascetic life, but form their own ascetic caste. In their religious attitudes the members of a caste enjoy great liberty, but are severely subjected to the socio-ethical rules and rites of the respective caste. Special rites have to be performed during the life cycle of each individual, and at certain festivals of the year for the whole community. Belief in the sanctity of the cow and abstinence from beef are again common characteristics of Hinduism.

Different from the "pucca" Hindus are the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and the Mlecchas ("Barbarians" like Muslims and Christians). This distinction at once excludes the tribal population from the Hindu community. The abolition of the caste system in the Constitution of India does not prove that it is abolished in practical life; unfortunately, casteism still flourishes vigorously.

The religious beliefs of the Tribal are, however, at variance with this complex concept of Hinduism.

The Niyogi Report states "that the animistic or tribal religion was hardly distinguishable from the Hindu religion"

(p. 29/18), relying on one of Dr. Elwin's opinions "that the religion of the Indian Aboriginal outside Assam should be regarded as the religion of the Hindu family". But Dr. Elwin expresses his highest estimation in "Things of Value in Tribal Life" (op. cit. p. 18 *seq.*) in his scholarly monograph "The Baiga", he writes:

"Before 1921, the census of India classified the religion of the Baiga and allied primitive tribes as 'animistic', but in that year a Census Commissioner, J. T. Martin, changes this designation into 'Tribal Religion' as being more accurate. For, as a more recent, and greater, Census Commissioner, Dr. J. H. Hutton, has shown, the beliefs held by the Tribes are not 'mere vague imaginings of superstitious and untaught mind' but the debris of a religious system, a definite philosophy, to the one-time prevalence of which the manifold survivals in Hinduism testify, linking together geographically the Austro-Asiatic and Australoid cultures of the forest-clad hills where the isolated remains of the original religion still holds out in an unassimilated form" (pp. 54 & XIV). This well-known anthropologist and research worker of Indian tribes states precisely: "Nothing Hindu there" (among the Baigas). The Niyogi Report itself admits that there exists "the deep-rooted tribal tradition and tribal customs", but tries in vain to escape the conclusion that "their cultures are most obviously distinct" from Hinduism (N.R., p. 24/2).

Belief in Personal God

The touch-stone for proving the difference between the tribal religion and Hinduism is the belief in a Supreme Being, creator of the universe—who created out of nothing—; the author of the godlings, the spirits and ghosts, the producer of men, animals and plants. He is friend and father to the good, and the inflictor of punishment to the bad because he is the omniscient author and invisible guardian of law and morals.

The belief in a creation out of nothing (*Creatio ex nihilo sui et subjecti*) by an eternal Supreme Being is one of the decisive points which will show whether the aboriginal has completely fallen under Hindu influence or has been able to retain, even partially, his own spiritual culture. The idea of a personal God, creating the world out of nothing, is one which runs counter to almost every system evolved by Hindu mentality. Monier-Williams points out that all Hindu sects 'believe in some material cause (Upadana)—some eternal substance out of

which the Universe is evolved' (Monier-Williams, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p. 119). "With what violence the theistic conception of creation is repudiated by Hindu men of learning can be seen from Abhedananda's Treatise: "Warum verwirft ein Hindu das moderne Kirchentum, obgleich er Christus anerkennt?" ('Vedanta Philosophic Series', p. 13) W. Koppers, *Bhagwan, the Supreme Deity of the Bhils*, Anthropos, 1940/4, p. 275. Held also points out that the Hindu idea of creation is "the arranging, the ordering of primordial matter. . . . There never was a time when nothing existed" (H. J. Held, *The Mahabharat*, Cfr. V. Elwin, *The Religion of an Indian Tribe*, p. 118).

The belief in a personal benevolent Supreme Being who made the world and all the spirits and men is a common one among the aborigines. This characteristic was stressed by S. C. Roy in his various works on the Kharias, Oraons, Mundas, etc. "The Supreme Deity—above the Dubos and other spirits and deities, the Kharias of all sections recognise the great God who is believed to be the creator of man as well as the Dubos and Deotas, and who rules both . . ." (*The Kharias*, p. 320). "The designation of 'animism' now commonly applied to their (the Mundas') religion appears to us to be inaccurate, if not actually a misnomer. A careful study of their religious beliefs and ceremonies will show that the Mundas believe in a supreme deity whom they call Sing-Bonga, and whose blessing they invoke before every important religious ceremony" (S. C. Roy, *The Mundas and Their Country*, p. 467).

The Supreme Being of the Oraons is Dharmaes, Creator of the Universe. "And the Oraon thinks, and there appear to be good reasons to think with him, that God has been known to the tribe or revealed himself to them from the very beginning of the creation of man, not as a deity but as the deity. The Oraon regards him as supreme over all, the Author and Preserver, Controller and Punisher of men, gods and spirits, of all that exist in the visible and invisible world" (S. C. Roy, *Oraon Religion and Customs*, p. 23).

The Santals give their Supreme Being the name Chando (Sun), Sing-Bonga (Sun spirit) and Thakur, who is the creator and sustainer of the world, the giver and taker of every man's life, the restorer of health, the final judge, the cause of rain, thunder and wind. The Santals "have many stories of his walking about in former times, visiting people and taking interest in their doings" (P. O. Bodding, *Santal Folk Tales*, Vol. 2, p. 334).

Even among the Gonds, who are regarded as the most Hinduised tribal people, the Supreme Being is called Ispural who can be traced (W. V. Grigson, *The Maria Gonds of Bastar*, p. 224).

The Korkus believe in Bhagwan as the invisible Creator and Preserver of the world, the Maker of men and animals, the Judge and Giver of reward or punishment. "All the other gods and goddesses are regarded as Bhagwan's servants" (W. Koppers, *op. cit.*, p. 304).

Thus all anthropological studies prove that not only are the aboriginal tribes of Central India well acquainted with the idea of the Supreme Deity but also the aboriginals of South India, of the Himalayan ranges and other parts of the Indian Sub-continent. Every tribe possesses a more or a less clear idea of a Supreme Being. Among the mountain tribes of the Himalayas, the Lepchas have preserved their old belief in an eternal Supreme Deity, as their myths of creation of the world and mankind, of the deluge and of the new spread of man, their legends of the origin of the gods, spirits and human souls, prove.* R. Rahmann deals with the High Gods among the primitive tribes of north-east India and shows that some tribes connect God with the sun and others with the moon; but the original Supreme Being has often preserved the old name like Sham Mungh (Kiranti), Thakar Jiu (Santal) ("Gottheiten der Primitivstämme im nordöstlichen Vorderindien", *Anthropos*, Vol. XXXI, 1936, p. 44 *seq.*).

The monotheistic belief of the tribal people bears very distinctive characteristics. In their ideal of an eternal, personal High God, the aboriginals ignore the existence of the typical Hindu "Eternal Law", Sanatana Dharma, and of the "Eternal Material Cause", Upadana. They reject the doctrine of Karma and Sansara applied to gods, spirits, men, animals and any living creature, but believe in a personal human soul which is created by Bhagwan and has to return to Bhagwan after man's death. Primitive man thinks of gods, spirits, ghosts and demons as distinct personalities who remain for ever in their respective sphere and do not transmigrate into another stage.

Koppers concludes: "We feel ourselves justified, even in duty bound, to turn the tables by asking if it was not perhaps those outland representatives of the Bhagavat religion whose viewpoints and efforts were strengthened—possibly even inspired—by the Bhils or other aborigines. . . . Is it then unjusti-

* M. Hermanns, *The Evolution of Man*, Bombay 1955, p. 72 *seq.*—Id., *The Indo-Tibetans*, Bombay 1954, p. 30 *seq.*

fiable to reckon with the possibility that in certain ways, as for instance in the matter of their strongly marked belief in one Supreme Deity, the aborigines may have had a voice in religious matters and made their influence felt?" (op. cit., p. 322).

This statement sounds quite incredible to somebody who is convinced that Tribal Religion is merely a lower form of Hinduism.

Spirit-worship

Some writers have seen in Tribal Spirit-worship, or "animism", the real common denominator between Hinduism and the Tribal religions. This is quite incorrect. The Nads of the Oraons, the Bongas of the Mundas, the Dubos of the Kharias, the Bhuts of the Bhils, and all the "spirits" of the various Tribal religions are distinct personalities, subject to the ruling Supreme Deity. They are not gods in the Hindu sense, but distinct subjects of Sing-Bonga or Dharmes, etc. If they are worshipped by sacrifice, it is to propitiate and placate them. This propitiation of spirits is a logical approach to the problem of evil. Rather than attribute evil to the always-benevolent Supreme Deity, the Tribals trace pain, sickness, sorrow and death to the agency of malevolent or at least dissatisfied inferior spirits. There is no similarity here with the complicated Hindu doctrine of "karma" which is also an approach to the problem of evil.

A special test of animistic mentality is the phallic worship, the Linga (Shiva) and Yoni (Durga) cult, so typical in Hinduism. Generally the tribal people were made responsible for such less creditable matters. "Just as the Rudra-Shiva cult borrowed several elements from the dwellers in the forests and stragglers in places out of the way, so it may have borrowed this element of phallic worship from barbarian tribes with whom the Aryans came in contact" (R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism*, quoted by W. Koppers, *Bhagwan*, p. 323). But all the ethnological studies prove the opposite. Not the simple jungle tribes are the authors of such symbols of sex fertility; it is people of a higher culture who are responsible for such perversions.

"All that has in the meantime come to light regarding a great pre-Aryan civilisation in the Indus Valley (Mohenjo Daro, Harappa) now permits us to see more clearly in this question. For excavations have shown that phallic worship was fully developed in this civilisation. It was originally unknown to the Aryans who came to India and they had a positive horror

of it. But in the course of time they succumbed to this form of worship, took it over and developed it with the closely allied Shiva cult. Shiva worship had probably played a considerable role in the old Indus Valley civilisation. A further internal cause of the rapid and intense development of phallic worship within the world of Hinduism was the ever increasing pantheism which affected all Hindu religious thought. The more belief in a personal God and in creation declined, the better could the notion of purely natural evolution as symbolised by the procreative action of male-female life force (lingam and yoni) come to the fore, and take possession of the fields of both philosophy and religion" (W. Koppers, op. cit., p. 323). Basham points out: "The horned ithyphallic god of Mohenjo Daro, surrounded by animals, may well be the prototype of Shiva, as the patron of reproduction in men, animals and plants. In this form he is known as Pashupati (Lord of Beasts) and is often represented in South India as a four-armed man. . . ." Further: "early Tamil literature refers to the setting up of ritual posts, which seem to have been phallic emblems" (A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, p. 308).

One can understand the desire to blame the non-Aryan elements for the frightful manifestations of the Durga cult, the practice of Kaulas who use bloody sacrifice of men and animals, the drunken orgies and sexual excesses; the horrifying rites of the murderous sect of the Thugs; the horrible cannibalism of a certain Sadhu sect; or the phallic worship and prostitution in special temples. These abuses and excesses are manifestations of decadent mixed culture in which Aryan elements are present. Among the uninfluenced Mongoloids and other Indian aboriginals, such perversions are completely unknown. How, therefore, can the tribals be backward Hindus?

Such cults of Hinduism are regarded by the Bhils, Baigas, Korkus, Mundas, Santals, Oraons, Lepchas, Kadar, Malapana-tram, etc., as something entirely foreign. That does not mean that sex does not play a very important role in the life of the aboriginals. "Food, magic and the bewar (shifting cultivation) are, I think, the predominant concern of the Baiga; but sex must not be underrated. It forms a necessary inevitable background. The Baigas have a full scheme of sexual symbols which are different from the Hindu ones. Curiously enough, the symbolism (common in ancient India) of the fire-drill is not used by the Baiga." And, so far as I can see, there is no phallic worship among them either (V. Elwin, *The Baiga*, p. 420).

Ancestor Worship

The next criterion of the difference between Hinduism and Tribal Religion is ancestor worship. With ancestor worship is interwoven the concept of the human soul and of afterlife, worship of dead people and sometimes deification of ancestors. The aborigines believe that human souls are created by the Supreme Being and gain a kind of immortality. Whether it be the Kadan, the Irula, the Chenchu or the Oraon, his belief in an afterlife is at variance with the Hindu concept of reincarnation.

Even these simple tribal people have their metaphysics. "The Munda's sense and conception of personality, of individual consciousness and identity is altogether different from that of the Hindu. . . . Through his birth within that community he has, once and for all time, become a Horo, a man, i.e. a Munda, and thus a member of the Horojat, the human or Munda race. He cannot conceive himself as ever again ceasing to exist or losing his personal identity by transformation into something else. He feels quite sure that after his bodily death he will remain the same individual and continue as member of the same family and the same race. Therefore, he distinguishes two worlds, the Odedisum, the earth world, and the Paromdisum, or simply Parom, the world beyond. . . . In this world he and his Hagako (brethren) are Horoko, Mundas, i.e. men; and in the next world they are Bongako, spirits, or Haromko, ancestors. . . . The deceased members of a family are also called Orabongako, household spirits. When the body of a deceased person is burnt or buried the disincarnate spirit (roa, not the ji) hovers for a few days over the remains of the body. After a time the bereaved relatives call upon that spirit and lead him back in a solemn procession to his former home. From that day, he remains with all the rest of the family spirits in the Adin, and partakes of all the gifts and worship which the living members offer to that confraternity" (Fr. Hoffmann, *Encyclopaedia Mundarica*, p. 533). The Ji is in the Bitarpur at the Paromdisum, the world beyond, and the roa is in the Adin of the house. Both of them receive their worship.

This metaphysical background explains why the aboriginals find the Hindu concept of Sansara, transmigration, fantastic in the extreme.

The apotheosis of the primeval ancestors and great clan-ancestors is again a characteristic of the belief of many aboriginal tribes, e.g. Malavay, Karivali, or Aiyappan of the Kadar,

Aiyappan as the deified ancestor among many Hill Tribes of Kerala, Ti gung thik of the Lepchas, Gorakh nath of the Bhils, etc.

Thus we could continue to list the many tribes of the aboriginals who practise ancestor worship because they believe in the permanence of the personal ego, and in the immortality of the spiritual soul, rejecting re-birth and the dissolution into Brahma. This religious complex belongs to the fundamentals of the Tribal Religion.

As the last example we would like to mention the Baigas who are wrongly quoted as "one of the most primitive Tribes of India" by the Niyogi Report. The Baigas, like the Gonds and the Bhils, belong to the most advanced and strongly Hinduised aborigines of India. In spite of the Hinduisation the Baigas are of the opinion that Bhagwan "first decides when a child shall be conceived, and later he sends a jiv to effect its quickening" (V. Elwin, *The Baiga*, p. 217). Thus Bhagwan gives the jiv to every child; and he "sends his chaprasis to fetch the jiv" bringing the soul back to God. Of man's three spiritual forces "the jiv goes direct to Bhagwan"; the chhaya, or shad, "is brought home to live for ever behind the earth" (op. cit., p. 294); his bhut, or ghost, dangerous and hostile, dwells at the burial place and haunts men and animals. Therefore, ancestor worship plays an important role in the Baiga life. "The Baiga probably did not originally believe in the re-birth of the soul, but many of them have adopted it from their Hindu neighbours, though not in the Hindu form. There is an old song quoted by Russell, which says, 'O girl, take your pleasure in going round the marriage-post once and for all, for there is no second birth'. A pregnant woman or a woman dying in childbirth is not re-born, nor is a witch or a man killed by witchcraft. Many Baigas deny that men can be re-born as animals. The form taken by the doctrine among the Baigas is a simple non-moral one that the souls of the dead return to live among their descendants. It is a sort of corollary of ancestor worship. The Hindu doctrine of transmigration, which is intimately bound up with the idea of Karma and caste, is entirely different" (op. cit., p. 295).

Thus there are overwhelming proofs that the concepts of the origin and destiny of the soul, the absence of the Hindu Karma- and Sansara-idea and the ancestor worship, which is very elaborate among some tribes, sharply contradict Hinduism. The statement of the Niyogi Report that "tribal religion was

hardly distinguishable from the Hindu religion" (N.R., 29/18) is scientifically a gross blunder.

Social Customs

As Tribal Religion is different from Hinduism, so it can be proved through sociology, customs, habits, economy, etc., that the aboriginals are entirely alien to the Hindu Society. As in religion, there are quite different social levels among the tribal people. The most primitive in this regard are again the food-gatherers, nomadic hunters and shifting cultivators. Their marriage customs are very simple and extremely plain. The couple look up to the heavens saying, "God", and point with their right hands towards the sky;—the usual ceremony of calling on God as witness to confirm an action. This is the proper marriage act which makes the marriage indissoluble. Matrimonial fidelity is very severe and strict. When these aboriginals were allowed to follow their own laws, the husband or the little group was bound to kill the unfaithful wife and the adulterer. If an unmarried girl became pregnant, she was killed. At birth and death and during the festivals of the year, all the ceremonies and rites, the songs and dances, were simple.

Clinging to their old social customs the aboriginals abhor many Hindu practices, e.g. to pre-puberty and no-widow-marriage. "Pre-puberty marriage never occurs among the Hill Marias who took upon it as an utterly abhorrent custom of the Kosar or Hindu. Unfortunately, a few Bison-born Marias are beginning to ape their Hindu neighbours in this as in other matters; but, even now, probably only 3 in a 100 Bison-born marriages are child marriages" (W. Grigson, *The Maria Gonds of Bastar*, p. 250).

Although child marriage is now forbidden by law, this Hindu tradition was certainly a strong factor in causing repugnance to Hinduisation. Of the "Kurmi", D. N. Majumdar writes: "The Kurmi of Behar have split into endogamous sections on account of changes in social standards, those who conformed to Hindu practices, allowed child marriage and prohibited widow marriage, refused to recognise those who still cling to tribal habits of thought and action and practise widow re-marriage which is contrary to orthodox Hindu sentiment" (D. N. Majumdar, *Races and Cultures in India*, p. 146).

In order to dispel once and for all this notion that the aborigines can justly be declared Hindus against their wish by the stroke of a pen on a Census report or the assertion of a

small group of theorists, it is necessary to turn to the Hindu Marriages Act and the Hindu Succession Act, which states: "This Act applies (a) to any person who is a Hindu by religion in any of its forms or developments, including a Vira Shaiva, Lingayat or a follower of the Brahmo Prarthana or Arya Samaj, (b) to any person who is a Buddhist, Jaina or Sikh by religion, and (c) to any person domiciled in the territory to which this Act extends who is not a Muslim, Christian, Parsi or Jew by religion, *unless it is proved that such a person would not have been governed by the Hindu law or by any customs or usage as part of that law in respect of any of the matters dealt with herein if this Act had not been passed*" [Sec. 2, sub-sec. (1)]. It is clear that anyone not previously mentioned, one who has never acknowledged himself governed by Hindu law, customs or usage may escape the denomination of Hindu. This is true even if he incidentally practises some customs similar to, or identical with, the customs and usages of Hindus, provided he does not practise them "as part of that (Hindu) law". If, for example, a man does not eat beef or drink liquor, he is not considered a Hindu as long as it is obvious that his habits are not intended as Hindu observances. Likewise individual members of the Scheduled Tribe, who are at present excluded by the Constitution from the operation of these Hindu Acts, can never be included even later, so long as they can prove and assert their continued unwillingness to subject themselves to Hindu law and Hindu observances.

There is no argument here about the aborigine who confesses himself a Hindu. Once accepted by Hindu society, Hinduisation is an accomplished fact in his case. The obvious point is that large sections of aborigines still retain some antipathy to Hinduism and so cannot be considered Hindus against their own consciousness and desire. Still less can they be enumerated as Hindus in the Census. No matter how many volumes of the Nivogi Report make their appearance, no matter how many times his alleged Hindu-like festivals, Hindu-like animism, general Hindu heritage is pointed out falsely to the poor gullible aborigine, he cannot become a Hindu as long as he refuses to acknowledge himself a member of the Hindu community. The Tribals have their own tribal law which is completely different from the Hindu law.

Babu Govinda Das in his "Essentials of Hinduism" simply says, "Everyone is a Hindu who does not repudiate that designation". Gooroo Das Banerjee says, "And Hindu Society now practically admits within its pale all persons who are

Hindus by birth, whatever their belief and practices may be, provided they have not openly abjured Hinduism or married outside of Hindu Society" (p. 16). Pratul Chandra Chatterji remarks, "In these circumstances, and as Hinduism has no definite creed, the only safe test to apply is to accept the statement of the person who claims to be a Hindu. In other words, I should say everyone is a Hindu who in good faith declares himself to be such" (op. cit., p. 106).

From these commonsense statements, it would seem clear that it is upto the aborigines themselves (and not the Niyogi Committee) to determine whether or not they are really Hindus. The fact that missionaries are accused of inducing separatist tendencies among them is the surest indication that many aborigines do "repudiate" or "abjure" Hinduism. Even if the charge about missionary influence were true—and it most certainly is not—those aborigines who repudiate Hinduism cannot be considered Hindus. No non-Aryan ever became a Hindu until he acknowledged himself a Hindu and was accepted as such by Hindu society.

The so-called "assimilation" of lakhs of tribal religionists into the Hindu fold in Madhya Pradesh and other provinces has taken place without the consent of the "assimilated" persons. In fact, the word "assimilation" is hardly the correct word to describe the conversion by the stroke of a pen which the Madhya Pradesh Government has perpetrated in the Census of 1951.

Anxiety for Hindu Solidarity

The whole assumption in the Niyogi Report seems to be firstly that conversion of tribals to Hinduism is necessary in order to endow the aborigines with a greater sense of nationalism and secondly that the chief obstacle to this change is the Christian missionary. This anxiety for the security and solidarity of Hindu society is observed elsewhere in many sections of the first volume. In the letter of Mr. Niyogi himself, the reader is advised that "throughout their deliberations, the Committee was guided solely by the necessity to maintain intact the solidarity and security of the country" (N.R., 11/4, 13/7, 132/7 and 153/71).

Like a good mother, India has always taken pride in the different characteristics, personalities and propensities of her children. She is even tolerant of the follies and foibles of her backward children. She knows that the spirit of tolerance must

be imbued in the diverse characters of all her brood. The Constitution is the family law and all must abide by it. Mother India has had enough of family feuds.

Parsis, Muslims, Jews and Christians are within her maternal embrace. These are not Hindus, but they are Indians and are her children, and the whole family knows that they are her true children. One need not become a Hindu to be a child of India. The oppressed, but still independent and unbeatable aborigines for the most part, do not consider themselves Hindus in spite of the testimony of superficial and falsified Census Reports.* The aborigines are India's *first-born*. They will always be hers, no matter what religion they profess. Provided they have been born in India or naturalized, the Parsis, the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims and the Aborigines of any religion whatsoever, or people of no religion whatsoever, *are all citizens of India*. No peaceable change of religion among them can possibly constitute a threat to national solidarity and progress. Mr. Niyogi's necessary assumption that the Hindu religion is the *only* basis for building a new and united India, which herself comprises so many different religions and cultures, can at the very least be called a frightful blunder. Mr. Niyogi stands revealed as a man utterly insensible both to the letter and the spirit of the law of the land, which is the Constitution of India. Not only that, Mr. Niyogi himself became a renegade to Hinduism by embracing Buddhism! His conversion is by itself a refutation of his Report.

Prime Minister on Aborigines

The leading statesmen of our country over and over again have emphasized the fact that national unity and solidarity can only be achieved by tolerance and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others. It is seldom at all that any leader of the country even hints that solidarity *must* be achieved through adherence or conversion to Hinduism. And yet the Niyogi Report repeatedly bases even national security on the alleged need for Hinduism to "assimilate" the Tribals. The revealing letter of Niyogi has already been cited. Fortunately, this is not the view of our national leaders. Prime Minister Nehru has no enthusiasm for the notion of "assimilation". In fact, he has a very strong fear of what he termed "imposition". Says he:

* Census of India Paper No. 2, 1953: Bombay State, p. 29; Madhya Pradesh, p. 32.

"We have to refrain from interfering with their (the aborigines) customs which bring grace and joy to their lives. At the same time we have to help them *to grow according to their own genius and culture*. Nothing would be more unfortunate than to try to impose ourselves upon them in any way" (*Indian Journal of Social Work*, Special Number on Tribal Welfare, Dec. 1953, p. 229).

In an article in the same issue entitled "Right Approach to Tribal People", Pandit Nehru gives the following advice to all who do social work among the aborigines: "If you approach the Tribal people with affection, go to them as a liberating force and as a friend so that they may feel that you have come not to take away something; that is the right integration. But if they feel that you have come to impose yourself, to interfere and come in their way, *to try to change their methods of living*, to take away their land, to push some of your businessmen there who will exploit them, then it is all completely wrong. The less we hear of this type of integration and consolidation of the Tribal areas the better" (p. 233).

Further, two false approaches are condemned by the Prime Minister: "There are generally two ways of approach to the problem of the tribal people. One might be called the anthropological approach of treating these people as museum specimens to be observed and written about and not as human beings with whom we could work and play. The other approach is rather of *ignoring that they are something special and different and trying to absorb them into the normal pattern of society elsewhere*. Both these approaches are wrong" (op. cit., p. 234).

The words of Pandit Nehru with their criticism of exploitation in business and land grabbing do not appear to refer to the Christian missionaries. The Christian missionary, nevertheless, is quite ready to "search his heart". Is it Christianisation or Hinduisation which is more apt to impose fundamental and radical changes of culture on the aborigines? In the event of a sizeable section of aborigines becoming Hindu, it would seem that a genuine uprooting of a distinctly Indian culture has taken place. We have seen how the full acceptance of the Hindu religion would imply for the simple aborigine an acceptance of a new pantheistic "Bhagwan" whose impersonality is compensated for by polytheistic tendencies. The Deity now would have to be worshipped under many forms and many names. The old simple monotheism is thus dissolved. The aborigine no longer would know his traditional one, the benevolent Supreme Being who was always satisfied to give him an

eternal reward after a *single* life well endured. He would have accepted the doctrine of "karma" which has seemed too complicated for many more learned men than himself.

On the social level, the fully Hinduised aborigine, though no longer induced to practise child-marriage, would be forbidden even the moderate use of liquor. In the event of a mass assimilation to Hinduism, it is presumed that his language would pass away from his memory—as has happened already among many tribes—as well as his own style of singing and dancing. Genuine conversions to Hinduism cannot but involve fundamental changes in the Tribals' religion and social customs.

Yet the Christian Missionaries will not accuse the sincere Hindu proselytisers of being a divisive force in the country. Those Hindu missionary efforts shall be free from this charge of "separatist tendencies", which do not involve force, fraud and the use of official government machinery. If the aborigines freely choose Hinduism and acknowledge themselves Hindus, then they will simply have chosen to change their own way of living; and the old culture, for better or for worse, will quietly pass away. Christianity, however, does not effect even a peaceful uprooting of culture.

Missions and Cultural Integrity

The views of the Catholic Church on "adaptation" of missionary procedure to the cultures of different peoples are well known. Here it will suffice to give some reliable testimony concerning the success which has attended the Catholic and other Christian missionary efforts in retaining and strengthening the cultural integrity of the aborigines. D. N. Majumdar writes: "The Mundas and the cognate tribes had passed through much vicissitudes of fortune, but the timely help, generous as it was, they received from the Christian missionaries and also from the administration, helped them through their crisis and today they show signs of life pulsating with hopes and fears, indicating vitality and sound grip on their future" (D. N. Majumdar, *Races and Cultures of India*, p. 273). With Christianisation this vitality remains, because the tribals are allowed to retain all their old customs except those which would imply a denial of the Christian faith. (An example of the latter: witchcraft and the propitiation of evil spirits.)

Sarat Chandra Roy explicitly praises the missionaries for not uprooting the ancient traditions of the Aborigines:

"The Christian Missionaries wisely permitted their Uraon converts to retain some of their tribal customs such as exogamy based on totemistic lineage and certain cherished folk customs and observances at birth and marriage which did not conflict with the cardinal tenets of the Christian faith. For their old tribal dances, substitutes were found in religious processions, feasts and festivals and congregational hymn-singing. Some young Uraon Christians in the villages may also be seen joining the old dance meetings, perhaps on the sly. No restrictions in matters of food were imposed; nor was the use of liquor tabooed, *though temperance was inculcated.*"

In this way, the new faith has come to be adjusted, as far as possible, to their old conceptions or habits.

"The educational and other philanthropic activities of the Christian missionaries for the moral, intellectual and social uplift of their converts has undoubtedly been of immense benefit to their converts and have indirectly benefited the unconverted as well" (*Uraon Religion and Customs*, p. 338). Actually, the traditional dances and songs, if regulated to avoid promiscuity and excesses, are encouraged, and a whole repertoire of genuinely Indian Aboriginal music has been collected and preserved by the Christians themselves.

Similarity in Religious Concepts

The tendency towards conversion to the Christian religion is easily understood. It is precisely because of some of their own deep-rooted religious concepts that many of the Aborigines have embraced the new faith. Despite the inferences of the Niyogi Report, the Aborigines are capable of recognising the inner harmony between their beliefs and the Christian faith. It is their monotheistic faith, as we have noted, and their belief in reward and punishment for good and evil deeds, that have prepared them for a natural assimilation to the Christian faith. They know instinctively that by conversion to Christianity they do not have to renounce what was most precious and dear in their own tradition and customs. Christian converts are noticeably relieved when they find that they no longer have to fear and propitiate the evil spirits, and when they find themselves no longer the victims of witchcraft.

The Aborigines, not being pure spirits but composed of body and soul, naturally look for the liberation of the whole

man. Hoping vaguely for improvement in their generally low condition, they perceive that the Christian missionaries treat them as men, offer them a religion of love and equality, a religion which is, as it were, the natural evolution of their own simple creed of stern realism, of personal responsibility for their actions, of faith and trust in a living, personal God.

The question is repeated: "Who has been causing the 'separatist tendencies' of the Aborigines which so worries the authors of the Niyogi Report?" It is suggested that the Committee looks for an answer elsewhere than among the Christian missionaries who have always had the unassailable reputation of being profound students of anthropology and of the social life of the peoples to whom they attempted to bring the religion of Christ.

Look elsewhere? It is possible to look elsewhere. Prof. A. R. Wadia, after giving due praise to the work of the missionaries, remarks: "Officers directly concerned with the administration of tribal areas did not hesitate to say that the approach made by Indians was often incorrect, and that without studying the culture and habits of the different tribes of Adivasis, an attempt had been made to 'reform' them" (*The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Dec. 1953, p. 298). These are the kind of blunders that alienate the Aborigines. The very publication of the Niyogi Report is still another, where the words "simple-minded" and "gullible" are repeated *ad nauseam*. The great mistake underlying the whole work is the arrogant assumption that the Aborigines are too simple-minded to be permitted to exercise their constitutional right of choosing their own religion. It is feared that "separatist tendencies" will be the order of the day for some time to come without any assistance from the missionaries, as they are already very serious and acute among the Nagas of Assam.

Among the Hill Tribes of Kerala in South India, Hindu teachers of the Government or of "Friends of India" schools, changed the non-Hindu names of pupils into Hindu names without the approval of the parents. They insisted on co-education irrespective of the custom of strict separation of boys and girls from the age of five or six till they get married at the age of 16 to 18. Then they tried to introduce the Hindu-calendar in spite of the age-old tribal cycle of the year. They compelled the people to stop the sacrifices of cock and goat which are offered during tribal festivals—just to mention a few instances of interference with deep-rooted tribal customs by zealotic Hindus.

Are the Tribals deceived?

Were the Aborigines deceived by the Missionaries who uprooted their cryptic Tribal Hinduism and made them hostile to the Hindu community? This is the last great accusation of the Niyogi Report we have to deal with from the anthropological point of view.

That large sections of the Aboriginal tribes still claim racial integrity and refuse to acknowledge themselves Hindus is an established fact (N.R., 24/2). It is, therefore, necessary to inquire into the real reason for this reluctance. For the Niyogi Report, the mystery is solved. The missionaries have simply instructed all the Aborigines in false anthropology. The Aborigines have been falsely informed by the missionaries of the distinction between their religion and that of the Hindus. It is assumed that there can be no other explanation for the arresting of the natural growth of Hinduism in the aboriginal soul. Truly! a "searching of the heart" is called for here—and an inquiry into the facts!

It is first necessary to point out that the Christian missionaries in their writings have shown themselves aware of the fact that a part of the Aborigines has long been adopting Hindu customs and usages and, to a limited extent, becoming "Hinduised". A recent survey and questionnaire conducted among the Catholic missionaries of Raigarh, Indore, Ranchi and Nagpur Dioceses makes open admission of complete absorption into Hinduism on the part of some segments of the aboriginal population. This is especially true of the Gonds in the urban areas. Complete Hinduisation, however, is rare in the more remote districts. The extent of *the adoption of Hindu customs*, naturally enough, is in direct proportion to the Aborigines' proximity to Hindu influences. In the vast majority of cases, the Aborigines do not acknowledge themselves Hindus even after assimilating some Hindu gods into their own pantheon or even after subscribing to a belief in the traditional Hindu doctrine of Karma. With the coming of the new Hindu missionary methods of the supposedly secular and disinterested Tribal Welfare Department, it is feared that Hinduisation will proceed at a more rapid pace. The children studying in Tribal Welfare Schools, who have already been forcibly endowed with Hindu names, will have no other alternative but to term themselves Hindus by graduation day. No one then will be able to argue against the fact of complete Hinduisation, but there

may be a timorous outcry against the way such a Hinduisation was accomplished.

On the question of whether the missionaries are responsible for the Aborigines' separatist tendencies, it is indeed unfortunate that the Niyogi Committee did not conduct its inquiry among those tribals who are virtually untouched by missionary activity. Despite the Committee's "detailed study", the Report mentions that the Committee did not visit the territories "inhabited by Marias" since "there are practically no converts to Christianity from this tribe". With the Marias, an unofficial investigation might have been made among those large sections of the Hos and Mundas in Singhbhum District and the Santhals in Manbhum where the missionaries have yet to station themselves. After learning the tribal language, let the Committee inquire sympathetically as to whether the said tribals consider themselves Hindus. The meaning of the word "Diku" will have to be understood by the members of the Committee as it will recur often in the course of their conversation with the Tribals. It is a very old word—older than Christianity perhaps. The secondary meaning of "Diku" is foreigner; the primary meaning is Hindu. It must be concluded that the presence or absence of the "considerable devotion of selflessness" of the Christian missionaries cannot be considered the separating factor in the obvious cleavage that exists to this day between the Hindu and Aboriginal cultures (N.R., 24/2).

Slow Process of Hinduisation

If the missionaries then are not responsible, what is the real reason why the process of Hinduisation has been so painfully slow during the past 3,000 years? The obvious place to look for an answer is in the utter dissimilarity of the Aboriginal and Hindu cultures. In the Niyogi Report itself it is suggested that there is a strong line of demarcation between Hindu and Aboriginal "characteristics and social customs".

By its constant disparagement of the Aboriginal people, the Report not only unnecessarily weakens its claims on the cultural similarity between Hindu and Aboriginal, but it furnishes the reader with another possible reason for the Aborigines' reluctance to accept Hindus as brothers. In the Report, it is stated that the Hindus are peace-loving and tolerant, but the gullible Aborigines are religious fanatics. It is further reported that the Committee "meeting many Oraons in the

course of our tours were struck very much by their total absence of religious feelings" (N.R., 123). The Hindus have a great sense of solidarity and of the community, but the Aborigines again and again are stated to show signs of isolationism, fissiparous tendencies, etc. (N.R., pp. 9, 10, 13, 26). The Hindus are civilized (N.R., p. 25) but the Aboriginal is a barbarian (N.R., p. 29). Thus the Niyogi Report continues an old Hindu tactic: disrespect and contempt of the barbarous aborigines.

The antiquity of Hindu-Aboriginal conflict has been asserted by many writers. Vishwanatha writes: "In every case the non-Aryans were driven for the most part, and such of them as remained were captured and converted into serfs. The traditional history of the Mundas discloses the migration of aboriginal people apparently under the pressure of the Aryan invaders" (S. V. Vishwanatha, *Racial Synthesis in Hindu Culture*, p. 75). S. C. Roy even makes conclusions from the Sanskrit Epics: "... one fact that stands out clear in the pages of ancient Sanskrit writers is from the earliest Vedic times down to the aitihāsik period—as the period of the great Sanskrit Epics has been called—the black aborigines were often the greatest opponents of the Aryan Hindus" (*The Mundas*, p. 35). Major Sutherland is quoted to illustrate how the struggle has been carried over into modern times: "The hatred of the 'Kols' (Mundas) seems to have been excited by the Hindu and Mohamedan inhabitants of this country, whom they call 'Sud' or foreigners. . . . The Hindus were mostly traders and money-lenders. Long stories are told of the enormous profits made by the former, and of the usurious interest levied by the latter . . ." (*The Mundas*, p. 209). Mr. Roy observes that the Government-established courts, far from mitigating the oppression of the "Kols", only served to increase it: "From this time on the fight between the two races, the Hindus and the aborigines . . . took another form, that of calling in the aid of the Police and the court of laws, an arena in which the Hindus soon became the master of the field" (op. cit., p. 218).

These facts are all well admitted by the Niyogi Report where we even read: "... and particularly no attempt to improve the educational, medical, mental or economic conditions of the aboriginals was ever made. The first positive step was taken by the British Government in the 19th century . . ." (N.R., p. 24). On the same page we also read how the Christian missionaries worked for Aboriginal uplift "with considerable devotion and selflessness". It is also mentioned that "the aboriginals have come to look upon the Hindus as hostile to

their interest and the Christian Missionaries as their friends". Evidently, the Niyogi Report assumed that "assimilation" of Aborigines would be much easier if they had no friends at all. Three thousand years of oppression and fundamental differences in religion and social customs have no doubt made the task of "assimilating" the Aborigines a difficult one under any circumstances.

In conclusion, the reader may rest assured of three basic facts:

1. *The Aborigines cannot be considered Hindus until they themselves acknowledge that they are Hindus* and that they are willing to be considered members of the Hindu Society. Arbitrary manipulation of the census figures, such as has happened in Madhya Pradesh, cannot by itself convert Tribals into Hindus. Acceptance of a few Hindu social and religious customs in certain places, unless they are accepted as part of the Hindu law, does not imply the *acknowledgment* by those Aborigines that they have become Hindus.

2. *The Missionaries are not the cause of the Aboriginal peoples' reluctance to acknowledge Hinduism*. Rather the reason lies in the religious and social differences of the two parties and the traditional enmity which the Niyogi Report is even now serving to augment.

3. The Constitution allows the right of proselytisation to Christians and Hindus alike. Christianisation, shown to be a process which is far from giving rise to the uprooting of cultures, needs no restrictions placed on it. Hence "conversions" to Christianity are surely as legal as Hindu "assimilation" under the present Constitution of our country, as long as it can truthfully be said that the conversion, Hindu or Christian, has taken place by right means.

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